



# A HISTORY OF THE U. S. S. R.

PART THREE

C O M P I L E D

*by*

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FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE

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M O S C O W 1948



*Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This book is a translation of the third part of "A History of the U.S.S.R." used as a textbook for the Soviet secondary schools. The textbook has ~~been~~ prepared by the Institute of History of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences and published by the State Textbook-Pedagogical Publishing House of the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. in 1947.



# C O N T E N T S

## The First Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Chapter I. THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION</i>	
1. Russia's Transition to Imperialism . . . . .	13
2. The Beginning of the Mass Political Struggle in Russia . . . . .	18
3. The Struggle to Create a Revolutionary Proletarian Party . . . . .	30
4. Tsarism and the Bourgeoisie on the Eve of the Revolution . . . . .	32
<i>Chapter II. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (1904-1907)</i>	
5. The Russo-Japanese War . . . . .	36
6. January 9, 1905—the Beginning of the Revolution . . . . .	43
7. The Mass Revolutionary Movement in the Summer of 1905 . . . . .	47
8. The October General Strike . . . . .	54
9. The National-Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Russia in 1905 . . . . .	62
10. The December Armed Insurrection . . . . .	66
11. Retreat of the Revolution . . . . .	74
<i>Chapter III. THE STOLYPIN REACTION (1908-1912)</i>	
12. The Third of June Monarchy . . . . .	82
13. Stolypin's Agrarian Reform . . . . .	86
14. The Decline of the Working-Class Movement and Ideological Confusion in the Period of Reaction . . . . .	91
15. The Bolsheviks During the Period of Reaction . . . . .	94
16. The Foreign Policy of the Stolypin Government . . . . .	98
17. The Growth of National and Colonial Oppression During the Period of the Stolypin Reaction . . . . .	102
<i>Chapter IV. YEARS OF REVOLUTIONARY ADVANCE (1912-1914)</i>	
18. The New Upswing of the Revolutionary Movement . . . . .	104
19. The Fourth State Duma . . . . .	112

## The Second Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution

<i>Chapter V. TSARIST RUSSIA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1914-MARCH 1917)</i>	
20. Russia's Part in the World War . . . . .	119
21. Brusilov's Breakthrough . . . . .	127

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
22. Growth of the Revolutionary Crisis . . . . .	129
23. The Revolt of the Peoples in Central Asia in 1916 . . . . .	134
24. Education and Culture in Russia Before the Revolution (1907-1917) . . . . .	137
<i>Chapter VI. THE FEBRUARY BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION</i>	
25. Overthrow of Tsarism . . . . .	142
26. The Dual Power . . . . .	147
<b>The Great October Socialist Revolution</b>	
<i>Chapter VII. PREPARATIONS FOR THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION</i>	
27. The Beginning of the Crisis of the Provisional Government . . . . .	152
28. The June Crisis . . . . .	160
29. The National-Liberation Movement of the Oppressed Nationalities in Russia After the Overthrow of Tsarism . . . . .	164
30. The July Crisis . . . . .	169
31. The Suppression of General Kornilov's Counter-Revolutionary Revolt . . . . .	176
32. Organization of the Assault . . . . .	180
<i>Chapter VIII. THE VICTORY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION</i>	
33. The October Armed Insurrection. . . . .	184
34. The Organization of the Soviet State . . . . .	200
35. The Triumphal March of Soviet Power . . . . .	208
36. Soviet Power Brings Liberation to the Oppressed Nations . . . . .	216
37. The World-Historic Importance of the Great October Socialist Revolution . . . . .	223
<i>Chapter IX. THE BREST-LITOVSK PEACE. THE STRUGGLE FOR A RESPIRE</i>	
38. The Brest-Litovsk Peace . . . . .	226
39. The Struggle of the Soviet Peoples Against the German Occupation Forces in 1918 . . . . .	230
40. The Beginning of Socialist Construction . . . . .	237
<b>Military Intervention. The Civil War</b>	
<i>Chapter X. THE BEGINNING OF MILITARY INTERVENTION</i>	
41. The Respite Ends . . . . .	240
42. The Defence of Tsaritsyn . . . . .	244
43. The Entente Armies Attack Soviet Russia . . . . .	253
<i>Chapter XI. DEFEAT OF THE THREE ENTENTE CAMPAIGNS</i>	
44. The Defeat of Kolchak . . . . .	262
45. The Defeat of Denikin . . . . .	271
46. Socialist Construction During the Civil War . . . . .	276
47. The Defeat of the White Poles and Wrangel . . . . .	283

**Chapter XII. THE CIVIL WAR IN THE BORDER REGIONS**

48. The Liberation of Kazakhstan and Central Asia . . . .	290
49. Soviet Power Is Established in Transcaucasia . . . .	293
50. The Defeat of the Japanese Interventionists . . . .	296
51. The Bolshevik Party, the Organizer of Victory at the Fronts . . . . .	302

## The Transition to the Peaceful Work of Economic Restoration

**Chapter XIII. THE STRUGGLE TO RESTORE THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY**

52. The Soviet State's Transition from War to Peaceful Economic Construction . . . . .	304
53. The Economic Restoration of Soviet Russia . . . . .	314
54. The Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics . . . .	318
55. Lenin's Behests . . . . .	324
56. The End of the Period of Restoration in the U.S.S.R. . . . .	332

**Chapter XIV. THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION (1926-1929)**

57. Steering a Course for Industrialization . . . . .	337
58. The Difficulties and Successes of Socialist Industrialization . . . . .	341
59. The First Five-Year Plan . . . . .	347

## U.S.S.R.—Land of Socialism

**Chapter XV. THE U.S.S.R. IN THE PERIOD OF THE STRUGGLE TO COLLECTIVIZE AGRICULTURE (1930-1934)**

60. The Struggle for the Socialist Reorganization of Peasant Farming . . . . .	353
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**Chapter XVI. THE STRUGGLE TO COMPLETE THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM. THE STALIN CONSTITUTION**

61. The Second Five-Year Plan for the Building of Socialism . . . .	365
62. The Great Stalin Constitution . . . . .	370
63. The U.S.S.R. Enters the Phase of Completing the Building of Socialism . . . . .	375
64. The Cultural Revolution in the U.S.S.R. . . . .	378
65. The Fight for Peace Amidst the Conditions of the Second World War . . . . .	386

**Chapter XVII. THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE . . . . .**

395

**PRINCIPAL DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.S.R. (1894-1946) . . . . .**

423



**A HISTORY**  
*of the*  
**U.S.S.R.**





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# THE FIRST BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

## *Chapter I*

### THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

#### 1. RUSSIA'S TRANSITION TO IMPERIALISM

**Tsarist Russia in the System of World Imperialism.** By the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the development of capitalism had finally brought it to its highest and last stage, that of imperialism.

Under imperialism the concentration of production achieves its utmost development. Almost the entire industry of a given country is concentrated in a small number of gigantic enterprises. Individual capitalists and capitalist combines enter into agreement with each other to eliminate free competition, which is thus superseded by the rule of the monopolies. Lenin defined imperialism as monopolist capitalism.

At the same time an intense centralization of capital takes place. A considerable part of the free capital of a country is concentrated in a few banks which, from humble intermediaries in the exchange process become transformed into all-powerful monopolies. The banks utilize their enormous capital for the purpose of promoting the development of industry. Bank capital merges with industrial capital. Lenin called this new form of capital, which by the beginning of the twentieth century became dominant in all the biggest capitalist countries, finance capital.

Under imperialism the struggle for markets leads to an acceleration of the export of capital to backward countries, colonies and semi-colonies. The capitalists strive to monopolize the sources of raw materials. This inevitably gives rise to a struggle for the redivision of the world, to a struggle for new territories. Comrade Stalin has defined this most important feature of imperialism in the following terms: "Imperialism is the export of capital to the sources of raw material, the frenzied struggle for monopolist possession of these sources, the struggle for a redivision of the already divided world, a struggle waged with particular fury by

new financial groups and Powers seeking a 'place in the sun' against the old groups and Powers which cling tightly to what they have grasped" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 15).

Imperialism intensifies all the contradictions of capitalism to the utmost degree; these contradictions can be solved only by the proletarian revolution. Under imperialism the contradictions between capital and labour become extremely intensified. The exploitation of the working class assumes such a character that it realizes that the only way out is to overthrow the rule of the imperialists.

The contradictions between the various financial groups and imperialist Powers also become so acute as to lead to armed conflicts—imperialist wars. The contradictions between ruling nations and colonial and dependent peoples also become intensified to the utmost. The inhuman oppression of the inhabitants of colonial and dependent countries compel these vast enslaved masses to fight for their independence and freedom.

The process of formation of the imperialist system was completed all over the world by the beginning of the 1900's.

In Russia, too, capitalism developed into imperialism, but in Russia imperialism bore numerous distinctive features. Lenin and Stalin called it militarist-feudal imperialism. Militarist-feudal imperialism bears all the characteristics of the imperialist system: intense concentration of production, formation of monopolies, export of capital, the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, struggle for the division and redivision of the world, and the extreme intensification of class contradictions. Thus, militarist-feudal imperialism in Russia was, above all, imperialism, a part of the world imperialist system.

The distinctive feature of imperialism in tsarist Russia was that Russian imperialism was enmeshed in a close net of feudal survivals. Remnants of feudal relationships survived in both industry and in agriculture and influenced the development of the various classes in society as well as the entire system of society and of state in twentieth century Russia.

Besides capitalist methods of exploitation, militarist and feudal methods were employed in tsarist Russia. The country was ruled by the representatives of the big feudal landowners. Owing to the restricted nature of the home market, the Russian landlords and capitalists strove to conquer foreign markets, and with this object they seized the best lands in the border regions of Russia and plundered the native inhabitants.

In describing the nature of militarist-feudal imperialism in Russia, Comrade Stalin wrote: "To begin with, tsarist Russia was the home of every kind of oppression—capitalist, colonial and militarist—in its most inhuman and barbarous form. Who does not know that in

Russia the omnipotence of capital coalesced with the despotism of tsarism, the aggressiveness of Russian nationalism with tsarism's role of executioner in regard to the non-Russian peoples, the exploitation of entire regions—Turkey, Persia, China—with the seizure of these regions by tsarism, with wars of conquest? Lenin was right in saying that tsarism was 'militarist-feudal imperialism.' Tsarism was the concentration of the worst features of imperialism raised to the second power" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 16-17).

Industry in Russia was very highly concentrated, but the methods of production remained backward. As regards concentration of production, Russia, at the beginning of the twentieth century, occupied one of the foremost places in the world. In 1900, seven huge plants in the south of Russia produced 37.6 per cent of the entire pig-iron output of the country. Five huge firms in Baku produced 42.6 per cent of the entire output of oil in Russia. Factories employing over a thousand workers constituted 11 per cent of the total number of factories in the country, and they employed about 50 per cent of the total workers in Russia.

The high concentration of industry was facilitated by the development of banks and joint-stock companies. By the beginning of the twentieth century eight big banks controlled 55.7 per cent of the total bank capital in Russia. The banks controlled 50 per cent of the capital invested in the iron and steel industry, 60 per cent of that invested in the coal industry and 80 per cent of that invested in the electrical engineering industry. Bank capital merged with industrial capital.

Large joint-stock companies occupied an important place in the industrial life of the country. Trade, and to some extent industry, was controlled by syndicates, which began to arise in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century and were the typical form in this country of the monopolist capitalist combine. Already at the end of the nineteenth century the Sugar Syndicate compelled all the sugar manufacturers of the country to combine.

At the beginning of the twentieth century many of the Russian banks were under the control of West-European banks. In 1901, French banks established the Northern Bank in Russia. The Deutsche Bank, one of the largest banks in Germany, controlled the Russian Azov-Don Bank. West-European capitalists invested about a billion gold rubles in Russian industries and banks and began to concentrate in their own hands vital branches of industry, such as iron and steel, fuel, chemicals and also several branches of the transport industry.

Cheap labour power, high prices of manufactured goods in the home market and the system of subsidies and protection introduced by the government ensured huge profits for both Russian and foreign capital. In the period from 1895 to 1904 foreign firms drew profits from Russia to the amount of over 830,000,000 gold rubles, a sum exceeding the

capital they invested during that decade. From foreign financiers, mainly French, the tsarist government obtained what for that time were huge loans. In 1903 tsarist Russia's foreign debt stood at the enormous sum of 3,000,000,000 gold rubles. Interest alone on these loans amounted to 130,000,000 gold rubles per annum, and this imposed a heavy burden upon the working people of the country. As a result of the intense influx of foreign capital into Russia, Russian tsarism and Russian capitalism became dependent upon West-European imperialism.

The Russian and foreign capitalists, aided and supported by the tsarist authorities, subjected the workers of Russia to monstrous exploitation.

**The Industrial Crisis at the Beginning of the 1900's.** The economic crisis which broke out in Western Europe at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century very soon spread to Russia. The influx of foreign capital sharply diminished. Owing to the poverty of the masses of the peasantry and the low wages earned by the workers, the purchasing power of the population was low. This aggravated the crisis. Production diminished considerably, particularly in the iron and steel and fuel industries: in 1902, the output of pig iron, for example, dropped 16 per cent below that of 1900. The crisis most disastrously affected the more highly capitalistically-developed regions (the Donetz Basin and others), where as many as 3,000 plants were closed down. Railway construction greatly diminished. Thus, from 1895 to 1900, over 3,000 versts of railway line were laid down annually, whereas in 1903 only 453 versts were laid down.

Only the largest enterprises were able to survive the crisis. During this period huge capitalist monopolies were formed in Russia under the control of foreign finance capital. In 1902 the Prodamet was formed. This was a huge syndicate for the sale of the products of the iron and steel industry which controlled 80 per cent of the entire iron and steel industry of Russia. In the oil industry there were two monopolist groups—Nobel Brothers and Rothschild. In this period too a sewing-cotton syndicate was formed, consisting of only two firms which monopolized the Russian sewing-cotton market. In 1904 the Prodvagon Syndicate was formed which monopolized nearly the entire sale of railway cars in Russia.

Taking advantage of the drop of share prices during the crisis, foreign banks bought up the shares of Russian enterprises and banks and thus became the owners of these enterprises. This still further increased the dependence of Russian capitalism upon West-European imperialism.

During the period of the crisis the number of factory workers greatly diminished. At some of the plants in the Donetz Basin more than half of the workers were discharged. This increase in unemployment



A Strike. From a painting by Drozdov

led to a worsening of the conditions of labour. The employers took advantage of the crisis to rob the workers of the gains they had won during the industrial boom. Everywhere piece rates were cut and the working day lengthened. Adult workers were replaced by youths and children who received only a half, or a third, of the pay which adults had received. The steady influx into the towns of starving peasants who constituted cheap labour-power also served to worsen the conditions of the workers.

## 2. THE BEGINNING OF THE MASS POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN RUSSIA

The Political Awakening of the Working Class and the Part Played by *Iskra*. The crisis hastened the political awakening of the working class. Their want and lack of rights, the unbridled tyranny of the employers, who always received the support of the police, and the oppression to which they were subjected by the tsarist authorities set the workers thinking about the causes of their hard conditions and compelled them to seek a way out. Thanks to the propaganda carried among them by the revolutionary Social-Democrats, they began to understand that the worst enemy of the people was the autocracy, which supported and encouraged the cruelest exploitation of the workers by the capitalists. An enormous part in the political education of the working class and in the organization of its struggle against the autocracy was played by the all-Russian Social-Democratic newspaper *Iskra*, which was founded by Lenin.

РОССИЙСКАЯ СОЦИАЛ-  
ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ  
РАБОЧАЯ ПАРТИЯ

# ИСКРА

„Из искры возгорится пламя!“  
Отвага демократов Цюриху

№ 1.

ДЕКАБРЬ 1900 ГОДА.

№ 1.

### НАШИШЬ ЗАДАЧИ НАШЕГО ДВИЖЕНИЯ

Русские социал-демократы не раз уже заявляли, что ближайшей политической задачей русской рабочей партии должно быть осуществление демократической революции, т. е. свержение самодержавия. Это заявление было сделано 15 лет тому назад, в 1885 году, в „Искре“. С тех пор прошло много времени, многое изменилось в жизни России, многое изменилось в сознании русских рабочих. Но задача, поставленная в 1885 году, остается та же. Самодержавие, которое в течение десятилетий было опорой и защитой помещиков и буржуазии, остается до сих пор самым страшным врагом русского народа. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача.

Второй задачей нашего движения является борьба за свержение самодержавия. Это самая главная задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача.

Третьей задачей нашего движения является борьба за свержение самодержавия. Это самая главная задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача. Мы должны бороться за свержение самодержавия, за установление демократической республики, за осуществление демократической революции. Это наша ближайшая задача.

Lenin, while still in exile in Siberia, drew up a plan for the publication of a proletarian newspaper which was to help in building up a revolutionary Social-Democratic party, for without such a party the proletariat could not fight for its emancipation.

Emphasizing the important part a newspaper could play in the work of organizing a party, Lenin, in an article entitled "Where to Begin?" wrote: "A paper is not merely a collective propagandist and collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer" (V. I. Lenin, *Select-ed Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1934, p. 21).

The newspaper was ceaselessly to expose the crimes of tsarism and the treachery of the liberals.

It was impossible, however, to publish such a newspaper in tsarist Russia. Lenin therefore decided to publish the paper abroad, where, at that time, conditions were more favourable for conducting revolutionary activities. The first issue of *Iskra* appeared in December 1900. On its title page it bore the motto "The spark will kindle a flame,"\* words taken from the reply which the Decembrists in exile made to Pushkin's appeal to continue the struggle. This motto was *Iskra's* pledge to carry to the end the revolutionary struggle that had been initiated by preceding generations.

Lenin edited *Iskra* in conjunction with Plekhanov and other Social-Democrats. It was printed on tissue paper, smuggled into Russia, and there distributed among the advanced workers. Workers caught reading *Iskra* were liable to imprisonment and exile, but this did not daunt the class-conscious workers. They became extremely devoted to *Iskra*, which they regarded as their guide in their political struggle. They impatiently awaited the appearance of every new issue of the paper, and when they received it they read and re-read it until it was literally worn to tatters. A weaver from St. Petersburg wrote to the paper saying: "When you read the paper you understand why the gendarmes and the police are afraid of us work-



V. I. Lenin in 1900

\* "*Iskra*" is the Russian for "spark."—*Tr.*



ers and of those intellectuals whose lead we follow. . . . In the past every strike was a great event, but now everybody knows that strikes alone are nothing, that now we must win freedom by fighting for it" (*Iskra* No. 7).

Workers in different towns acted as *Iskra's* correspondents. Among these were I. V. Babushkin and other advanced workers whom Lenin had trained in Social-Democratic study circles in the 1890's. In the beginning of 1901, copies of the first issue of Lenin's *Iskra* reached Tiflis (now Tbilisi). On Comrade Stalin's proposal the Tiflis Committee of the Social-Democratic Party announced its solidarity with the policy of *Iskra*. In September 1901 the first issue of an illegal Georgian newspaper entitled *Brdzola* (*The Struggle*), edited by Comrade Stalin, appeared. This newspaper was printed in an underground printing plant that was set up in Baku by a colleague of Comrade Stalin, Lado Ketskhoveli. *Brdzola* was the best *Iskra*-ist newspaper in Russia. Pursuing the political line advocated by Lenin's *Iskra*, it undeviatingly fought for the unity of the working-class movement of Georgia with that of the whole of Russia.

After the Tiflis Committee had declared its solidarity with *Iskra*, other Social-Democratic Committees in Russia did the same.

**The First Political Demonstrations in 1900 and 1901.** As a result of the industrial crisis and the propaganda conducted by the revolutionary Social-Democrats, the mass working-class movement took another step forward and passed from economic strikes to political strikes and demonstrations.

The first to come into the streets with red flags and the slogan "Down with the autocracy!" were the workers and students of Kharkov. This demonstration occurred on May Day 1900 and created a profound impression upon the workers all over Russia. In August 1900, after a strike of the workers employed in the Tiflis railway workshops, Comrade Stalin issued a leaflet calling upon the workers to commence an open revolutionary struggle. The first open revolutionary demonstration of the Tiflis workers was organized by Comrade Stalin in April 1901, and about 2,000 workers took part in it.

In 1901, May Day demonstrations and strikes took place all over the country. Of exceptional importance were the events that occurred at the State Obukhov Munitions Plant, near St. Petersburg (now the Bolshevik Works), which have gone into history as the "Obukhov defence."

On May 1, 1901, as a result of the propaganda conducted by the Social-Democrats, of the 6,000 workers employed at the Obukhov Works, 1,200 stayed away from work. The management discharged the most advanced and active workers at the plant. This gave rise to a protest strike which commenced on May 7. The workers demanded the reinstatement of the discharged workers and the dismissal of a number of foremen whom they detested. In answer to this demand



*The Obukhov Defence, May 1901. From a painting in the Museum of the Revolution, Moscow*

the assistant manager said with a contemptuous sneer: "Next thing, perhaps, you will demand the discharge of the Cabinet Ministers!" "Not only the ministers, but also the tsar!" retorted the workers. Police and troops were called out against the strikers. To bar their way the workers erected barricades, and when the soldiers arrived they were greeted with a hail of stones, logs of wood and chunks of iron. The police and the troops could not take the workers' living quarters except by storm. An active part in the defence was played by women. The workers in neighbouring plants joined the strikers. The fight lasted three hours. The troops occupied all the streets and side streets adjacent to the factory. Eight hundred workers were arrested, of whom thirty-seven were put on trial. At the trial, the workers delivered vehement speeches denouncing the autocracy. Several of them were condemned to penal servitude, and to terms of imprisonment; the rest were deported from the capital. These sentences evoked protests from workers all over Russia.

Appraising the "Obukhov defence" as a new form of the mass proletarian struggle, Lenin wrote: "Street fighting is possible, it is not the position of the fighters but the position of the government that is hopeless if it has to deal with larger numbers than those employed in a single factory" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. IV, Book I, New York, 1929, p. 121).

**Political Strikes and Demonstrations in 1902 and 1903.** The mass working-class movement to an increasing degree assumed a political character. In Transcaucasia the political struggle of the workers was led by Comrade Stalin. On the instructions of the Tiflis Committee he went to Batum (now Batumi), and taking up his quarters in the working-class suburbs he conducted revolutionary activities among the Batum workers.

In Batum, Comrade Stalin organized eleven study circles and formed a Social-Democratic organization in that town. On the night of December 31, 1901, in the guise of a New Year's Eve party, the first Social-Democratic Conference was held in Batum; at this conference the Batum Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was elected.

In January 1902 Comrade Stalin organized and led the first strikes at the Batum oil plants. In the beginning of March 1902 a fire broke out in the storehouse of the Rothschild plant. The workers spent two days and nights extinguishing the fire, but the management refused to pay the workers for this time. The workers threatened to go on strike and the management yielded. Encouraged by this victory, the workers in other plants went on strike in support of economic demands. On the night of March 7, the police arrested thirty-two strikers. On March 9 a workers' demonstration was held in response to Comrade Stalin's appeal. The workers marched in columns to the deportation centre where the arrested strikers were detained, and demanded their release. Sol-



The Demonstration of the Batum Workers on March 9, 1902, led by Comrade Stalin.  
*From a painting by A. Kutateladze*

diers, their rifles at the ready, barred the way of the demonstrators. Comrade Stalin delivered an impassioned speech to the workers calling upon them to resist. Just then volleys of rifle fire rang out; fifteen men were killed and fifty-four were wounded. The funeral of the victims of this massacre that was held next day developed into an immense political demonstration against tsarism. The police arrested 450 workers and made intense efforts to find Comrade Stalin, but the workers concealed him in their homes. As he moved from one worker's home to another, the press used for the printing of passionate appeals to the Batum workers and to the Ajar peasants was removed also. From time to time he arranged meetings in the cemetery, the watchman of which sympathized with the working-class movement. Soon, however, it became impossible for Comrade Stalin to hide in Batum any longer and so, taking his printing press with him, he moved to the village of Makhmudia, near Batum, where an old Abkhazian peasant named Hashim concealed him in his garret. Old Hashim was inspired with profound respect for the young revolutionary and began to help him. Every day he would take a large basket filled with vegetables and fruit, under which were concealed pamphlets and leaflets, and taking up his stand at the factory gates to sell his produce he would wrap the vegetables and fruit in these leaflets and hand them to workers whom he knew. These, in turn, gave them a wide circulation. The mysterious activities that went on in Hashim's house attracted the attention of neighbouring peasants and one day they came to Comrade Stalin and asked him what he was doing. Comrade Stalin answered: "I print leaflets in which I describe what hard lives you are leading and how the trouble can be mended." "That's fine," said the old peasants. "What you are doing is for our good. . . . Until today Hashim alone hid you . . . now we shall all hide you and your work to the best of our power and ability."

Nevertheless, in April 1902, the police managed to discover Comrade Stalin's hiding place and arrested him. In November 1903 he was exiled to the village of Novaya Uda, in the Irkutsk Gubernia; but two months later he escaped from there and returned to Tiflis to resume his revolutionary activities.

The political struggle of the proletariat in 1902 and 1903 assumed wide dimensions in other towns of Russia too. In May 1902, a demonstration was held in Sormovo, near Nizhni Novgorod (now called Gorky). The demonstrators were arrested and tried. At the trial the banner-bearer, a worker named Zalomov, delivered a passionate speech in which he described the conditions of the workers and called upon them to wage a struggle against the autocracy. Subsequently, this speech was illegally printed and distributed. The Sormovo demonstration is described in Maxim Gorky's novel *Mother*, in which Zalomov figures under the name of Pavel.

An important factor in the political education of the working class was the railway strike in Rostov-on-Don in 1902, which developed into the first general strike in Russia. The workers of nearly all the trades and factories in the city were involved. The conditions of the workers in the Central Workshops of the Vladikavkaz Railway were extremely hard. All the workers, even those who had worked there for over twenty years, were regarded as dayworkers, and according to the tsarist laws they could be discharged at any moment without notice. The payment of wages, low though they were, was systematically delayed. In the beginning of November 1902, the 4,000 workers put forward demands, drawn up for them by the Don Committee of the



J. V. Stalin in 1902

R.S.D.L.P., for a 9-hour day and a 30 per cent increase in wages. The management rejected the claim and the workers went on strike. The workers of other factories in Rostov joined the strike and about 30,000 were involved. The Don Party Committee organized meetings in a ravine outside the city at which Social-Democratic orators spoke and read out Social-Democratic leaflets. For the first time in the history of Russia the views of the Social-Democrats on the tasks of the working class were openly proclaimed at public meetings. The workers displayed fine staunchness and solidarity. At one meeting a Colonel of Gendarmes appeared and ordered the workers to disperse. The speaker who was addressing the meeting asked: "Shall we obey this order?" "No, we shall not!" came the loud and unanimous reply. "In that case remain where you are and let us continue our talk," said the speaker. Meetings continued to be held. The authorities were disconcerted by the organized resistance of the workers and called out the Cossacks from the near-by villages. But when the Cossacks attempted to disperse the meetings the assembled workers and their wives and children lay flat on the ground. The horses would not step upon the prostrate people and the Cossacks were obliged to retire.

Several days later soldiers fired upon a crowd assembled at a meeting and killed and wounded several workers. So incensed were the

workers by this outrage that they turned the funeral of the victims into a revolutionary demonstration. Only after mustering troops from neighbouring towns did the authorities succeed in suppressing the strike. The police arrested many of the advanced workers and deported them from Rostov.

The Rostov strike, which developed into a political demonstration, was an extremely important factor in stimulating the class consciousness of the workers. As Lenin wrote: "For the first time the proletariat is standing up as a class against all the other classes and the tsarist government" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., pp. 105-106).

The workers were taught by their own experience that an armed struggle against tsarism was necessary.

They were led to this conclusion also by the general strikes in Transcaucasia and in the Ukraine, in the summer of 1903. At the end of May 1903, a strike broke out among the oil workers in Baku. The workers in the engineering shops and railway depots joined the strike. In June, 45,000 workers were involved in the strike, now a general strike. Even the bakers, bootmakers and tailors went on strike; shops were closed and no newspapers appeared. The workers demanded an 8-hour day and an increase in wages. The strikes were led by the Baku Social-Democratic Committee. Meetings were held at which political speeches were delivered and revolutionary leaflets were distributed. As there were few troops in Baku, the employers resorted to a manoeuvre and pretended to accede to the workers' demands; but as soon as more troops arrived they withdrew their concession. The Caucasian Party Committee called upon the workers of Tiflis and of other towns to back the demands of the Baku workers by means of a solidarity strike. On July 14, a general strike broke out in Tiflis which lasted ten days. Soon this strike spread to all the industrial centres in Transcaucasia and over 100,000 workers were involved. In a number of places the workers came into collision with the Cossacks and the police. At Mikhailovo (now Stalinisi) the workers tried to stop a train but were shot down by the soldiers who were guarding the railway. This massacre resulted in the outbreak of new protest strikes.

The general strike spread to the Ukraine—to Odessa, Kiev and Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk). Noting the characteristic features of this general strike of 1903, Lenin wrote: "The strikes affect an entire area, over 100,000 workers are involved, mass political meetings are repeatedly held during strikes in a number of towns. One feels that we are on the eve of barricades. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 106.)

The working-class movement roused other strata of the population. From 1899 onwards, student unrest and strikes were an annual

occurrence, and at their meetings the students put forth political demands. Bogolepov, the Minister of Education, issued "Temporary Regulations" ordering that students who were involved in this unrest be conscripted for the army. Notwithstanding the repressive measures taken against them, the student movement grew. In 1901, following the example of the workers, the students and radical intelligentsia in St. Petersburg held a demonstration near the Kazan Cathedral. The demonstrators were brutally assaulted by the police. In 1901-1902 a general students' strike affected all higher educational establishments and 30,000 students were involved.

**The Zubatov Stratagem.** The tsarist government realized that it could not cope with the working class by means of repressive measures alone. Scared by the steady growth of the revolutionary working-class struggle it tried to check the mass working-class movement with the aid of police-formed workers' organizations. Playing upon the economic needs of the workers, agents of Zubatov, the Chief of the Moscow Secret Police, called meetings of the more backward sections of them and told them that the tsar would support their peaceful economic demands if they refrained from organizing strikes and took no part in political struggle.

Zubatov societies were formed in Moscow, Minsk and Odessa. In Moscow Zubatov's agents succeeded, on February 19, 1902, the anniversary of the abolition of serfdom, in organizing a monarchist demonstration of workers to the monument of Alexander II. Soon, however, this insidious movement utterly collapsed. The revolutionary Social-Democrats, followers of Lenin, exposed the fact that the police were behind the Zubatov organizations. In spite of the opposition of Zubatov's agents, the workers backed their economic demands by strikes. Fearing that he would lose his influence over the workers, Zubatov sent police officials to the factory owners and compelled them to make concessions to the workers. This roused the ire of the Moscow factory owners and they protested against Zubatov's activities. One of them, a Frenchman named Goujon, complained to the French Ambassador that Zubatov was supporting a strike at his plant. The ambassador communicated this complaint to the Russian government and soon after the Zubatov organizations in Moscow were dissolved.

The failure of the Zubatov stratagem as an attempt on the part of the government to "harmonize" the economic needs and demands of the workers with the "aims of the Russian autocracy" was most vividly revealed by the general strike in Odessa in 1903. Here an economic strike which had been organized with the help of Zubatov agents developed into a political strike. Even the most backward workers became convinced that the Zubatov organizations were a police affair and began to go over to the side of Social-Democracy. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, made haste to dissolve these organizations. The chief



reason for the failure of the Zubatov organizations, however, was the growth of the working-class movement, which was not to be checked by means of a barrier like the Zubatov stratagem.

**The Peasant Movement in 1902.** The revolutionary struggle waged by the workers affected the peasantry, among whom discontent continued to grow. The chief reason for this discontent was that when they were "liberated" in 1861 the landlords deprived them of the best parts of the land which they had cultivated. Hence, the peasants were obliged to rent land from the landlords, making payment in the shape of work on the landlord's estate or of half the crop raised on the land rented. The huge estates of the landlords—the latifundia—continued to hinder the development of peasant farming. As Lenin wrote: "...The sum and substance of the matter is that at one pole of Russian agriculture we have 10,500,000 households (about 50,000,000 inhabitants) with 75,000,000 desyatins of land and at the other pole we have *thirty thousand families* (about 150,000 inhabitants) with 70,000,000 desyatins of land" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 224).

Thus, on the average, one peasant family had seven desyatins of land whereas the latifundia of a single squire amounted to 2,333 desyatins, *i. e.*, 333 times as much. The old serf form of exploitation crushed and ruined the peasants. After the frightful famine of 1891-1892 the peasants, up to 1900, experienced another three famine years and two that were almost such. In the autumn and winter of 1901-1902 there was another famine. The kulaks took advantage of the hard straits of the peasantry to get the poorer section of them into their clutches. In this way nearly half the area of peasant lands passed into their hands.

Owing to the growth of the peasant population, the average peasant allotment by the beginning of the twentieth century was only half the size it had been in the past. The land hunger of the peasants increased and obliged them to rent land from the landlords and kulaks at exorbitant rents. In some places the rent exceeded the income that could be derived from the land because, while rents rose, income from the land dropped, particularly in bad harvest years.

The impoverishment of the bulk of the peasantry increased and this caused an increase in arrears in the payment of taxes. In some counties the peasants were as much as three or four years in arrears. The ruined and impoverished peasantry began to fight for the abolition of landlordism.

In the spring of 1902 considerable peasant unrest broke out in the Ukraine—in the Kharkov and Poltava Gubernias where the peasants' land hunger was particularly acute. By the beginning of the twentieth century the average peasant allotment in the Poltava Gubernia had shrunk to one desyatin, whereas the landlords owned as much as

60 per cent of the entire land in the gubernia. The industrial crisis still further aggravated the poverty of the peasants as it deprived them of the opportunity of finding work in the towns. The peasants rose in revolt, raided the landlords' estates and shared their grain stocks and cattle among themselves. Landlords were killed by peasants who set fire to their farm buildings and other property.

Troops were called out against the peasants. After a wholesale flogging many of them were put on trial and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Fines were imposed upon them for the benefit of the landlords amounting to 800,000 rubles. Notwithstanding the stern punishment that was inflicted upon the peasants in the Ukraine, the revolutionary peasant movement spread to other gubernias and was particularly intense in the Saratov Gubernia. Here the peasants fought the landlords by setting fire to their mansions, trespassing on their land, cutting down their trees, setting fire to their crops, and so forth. Peasant riots also broke out in the Tambov, Voronezh and Ekaterinoslav Gubernias, and also in the Caucasus.

In 1903 the peasant movement assumed an exceptionally mass and militant character in Guria where, influenced by the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, it assumed a political character. The peasants refused to deliver half their crops to the landlords, refused to pay the tithes for the maintenance of the clergy, refused to pay taxes, would not recognize the tsar's officials and refused in a body to perform labour rent. To assist the Transcaucasian landlords the tsarist government sent in Cossacks who dealt cruelly with the peasants; it also deported many of the peasants to Siberia.

Taken on the whole, however, the peasant revolt of 1902 did not yet assume the character of an organized mass movement. Lenin attributed this failure to the following reasons: "The peasant revolt was crushed because it was a revolt of an ignorant, unconscious mass, a revolt without definite and clear *political* demands, i. e., without demands for a change in the system of *state*. The peasant revolt was crushed because it took place *without preparation*. The peasant revolt was crushed because the rural proletarians had not yet formed an alliance with the urban proletarians. These are the three reasons for the first failure of the peasants" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. V, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 312).

Lenin dealt with the conditions of the peasants in Russia in his pamphlet *To the Rural Poor* in which he called upon the peasants to wage a determined struggle under the leadership of the workers against the tsar and the landlords.

### 3. THE STRUGGLE TO CREATE A REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAN PARTY

**Preparations for the Formation of a Party of a New Type.** In the epoch of imperialism the utter incapability of the old Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe to organize the workers for a revolutionary struggle for the proletarian revolution was clearly revealed. Hence, Lenin and his supporters launched a struggle for the formation of a party of a new type.

As Comrade Stalin wrote subsequently, the conditions prevailing under imperialism reveal "the necessity for a new party, a militant party, a revolutionary party, one bold enough to lead the proletarians in the struggle for power, sufficiently experienced to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of the revolutionary situation and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 81).

The new party that Lenin and Stalin and their closest colleagues built up was armed with the weapon of Marxism-Leninism—the most advanced revolutionary theory extant.

The most important task that confronted Lenin's *Iskra* was to draw up a program around which the Party was to unite. This program indicated first and foremost the ultimate aim of the proletarian class struggle—Socialism. This was the maximum program. It also formulated the demands for which the proletariat fought while on the road to the ultimate goal. This was the minimum program.

Lenin unfolded his plan for building a party of a new type in *What Is To Be Done?* In this work of genius he urged that the nucleus of the Party should consist of professional revolutionaries for whom Party work would be their main profession. Amidst the conditions prevailing under tsarism, the Party could not be other than a strictly secret organization, but at the same time it must not isolate itself from the working class, of which it was the vanguard. The members of the Party must be united ideologically and organizationally; they must be united in their advocacy of Marxian theory, uphold the program and tactics of the Party, take an active part in the work of the Party organization and maintain Party discipline. Lenin pointed out that the task of the Marxist party was to combine Socialism with the working-class movement. Only by disseminating the great teachings of Marx among the working class, urged Lenin and Stalin, could the Party infuse socialist consciousness into the spontaneous working-class movement and make the proletariat understand its world historic mission to build the new socialist society.

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. *Iskra* rallied around itself a compact organization of professional revolutionaries led

by Lenin and Stalin. Among *Iskra's* agents, as the supporters of Lenin were then called, were N. E. Bauman and I. V. Babushkin. After winning the support of the majority of the Social-Democratic Committees in Russia, the *Iskra* organization set to work to prepare the Second Congress of the Party. This congress took place abroad in July and August 1903, (in Brussels, and later in London).

The congress adopted the Party program as presented by *Iskra*. The opportunists at the congress opposed this program, in particular, the demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat. But Lenin answered them with crushing effect. The sharpest disagreements at the congress arose over the formulation of point 1 of the Party Rules. Lenin's formulation of point 1 read as follows: "A member of the Party is one who accepts its program, and supports it both financially and by his personal participation in the work of one of its organizations." The formulation proposed by the opportunist Martov called merely for the acceptance of the program and the rendering of financial support, but did not make it obligatory to participate in the work of one of the Party organizations. Unlike Lenin's formulation, the one proposed by Martov opened the door of the Party to unstable non-proletarian elements. With the object of preventing the Party from being swamped by petty-bourgeois elements the Leninists made strict demands on those who wished to join the Party.

In appraising the essence of that struggle Comrade Stalin wrote: "By their formula on Party membership the Bolsheviks wanted to set up an organizational barrier against the influx of non-proletarian elements into the Party. The danger of such an influx was very real at that time in view of the bourgeois-democratic character of the Russian revolution" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 381).

The Leninists stood for a militant revolutionary proletarian party; the Martovites stood for a petty-bourgeois opportunist party.

At the elections of the central bodies of the Party, Lenin's supporters obtained a majority and from that time onwards were called Bolsheviks. The opportunist Martovites were left in the minority and were thenceforth called Mensheviks.\* The Mensheviks, who took the place of the Economists, reflected the interests of the non-proletarian, petty-bourgeois strata of society.

The Second Congress of the Party played an extremely important role in the history of the Russian and international proletariat. At this congress was formed the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party

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\* The Russian word for "majority" is "*bolshinstvo*" and the Russian word for "minority" is "*menshinstvo*," hence the respective terms Bolshevik and Menshevik.—Tr.

(R.S.D.L.P.), the revolutionary party of the working class in our country.

To combat the efforts of the Mensheviks to turn the Party back to the old road of amateur and study-circle methods, Lenin wrote that splendid book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, in which, for the first time in the history of Marxism, he expounded the doctrine that the Marxist party is the proletariat's chief weapon in its struggle for the proletarian revolution.

#### 4. TSARISM AND THE BOURGEOISIE ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

**The Bourgeois Liberal Opposition.** The mass movement of the proletariat and the peasantry in the beginning of the twentieth century helped to rouse the bourgeois liberals and the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia to political activity.

The stronghold of the liberal landlords were the Zemstvo administrations which dealt with the local affairs of the rural population. The Zemstvo liberal landlords were connected with the liberal bourgeoisie and were almost merged with them, for they themselves were beginning to introduce capitalist methods in agriculture. Political groups of the liberal bourgeoisie arose, and in the summer of 1903 these groups united to form the League of Emancipation, which claimed as its object the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in Russia. They accused the workers and peasants who were fighting for their economic and political emancipation, of displaying "class egoism," and they attributed the poverty of the peasants and the agrarian movement to the "ignorance of the peasants." The bourgeois liberals were hostile to revolution and wanted to achieve the constitutional monarchy by peaceful means.

In the columns of *Iskra* Lenin constantly denounced the treachery and cowardice of the bourgeois-liberal opposition.

As a result of the peasant movement, Narodnik organizations began to spring up again among a section of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. In 1902 these groups united to form the Socialist-Revolutionary Party (known for short as the S. R.'s), which revived the tactics of individual terrorism against the tsar's ministers. In April 1902 the Minister of the Interior Sipyagin was assassinated. His place was taken by the arch reactionary Plehve, who for many years had been at the head of the secret political police. The terrorist tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries caused enormous harm to the revolutionary movement, particularly in view of the development of the mass struggle. The terrorist section of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party was headed by Azef, who was subsequently proved to be an agent provocateur. He directed the entire terroristic activities of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party under

the instructions and in the interest of the tsarist secret police and betrayed the participants in projected acts of terrorism to the gendarmes.

The Socialist-Revolutionary Party claimed to be a socialist party and to champion the interests of the "working people" as a whole, drawing no distinction between the peasant poor and the kulaks. Actually, the Socialist-Revolutionaries were not socialists at all, but represented the Left wing of the bourgeois democrats. The bourgeois liberals secretly supported and financed the terrorist activities of the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

In 1902, Lenin wrote that the Socialist-Revolutionary Party was a party of "revolutionary adventurism" that stood apart from the working-class movement. He also said that "without the working people bombs are utterly useless." The Socialist-Revolutionaries picked out and adhered to everything that was fallacious in the theory and practice of the former Narodniks.

The Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party adopted a resolution on the Socialist-Revolutionaries which stated that it "regards their activities as harmful not only to the political development of the proletariat but also to the general democratic struggle against absolutism."

**Tsarism in the Struggle against the Movement for National Liberation.** Influenced by the development of capitalism and the proletarian class struggle at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the oppressed non-Russian nationalities which constituted 57 per cent of the entire population of Russia began to awaken to active political life. This awakening found expression in the formation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties.

Tsarism cruelly suppressed the nascent movement for the liberation of the oppressed nations in Russia. Towards the beginning of the twentieth century national oppression became still more intense: the remnants of the cultural institutions of the oppressed nationalities were destroyed, instruction in the native languages in schools was prohibited, and the national organizations of the non-Russian peoples were persecuted.

Characterizing the colonial policy of tsarism, Comrade Stalin wrote: "Tsarism deliberately cultivated patriarchal and feudal oppression in the border regions in order to keep the masses in a state of slavery and ignorance. Tsarism deliberately settled the best areas in the border regions with colonizers in order to force the natives into the worst areas and to intensify national enmity. Tsarism restricted and at times simply suppressed the native schools, theatres and educational institutions in order to keep the masses in intellectual darkness. Tsarism frustrated the initiative of the best members of the native popu-

lation. Lastly, tsarism suppressed all activity on the part of the masses of the border regions" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, p. 71).

In all the non-Russian national regions the tsarist government pursued a policy of forcible Russification. This policy found most vivid expression in the sphere of public education. In the Caucasus, at the end of the nineteenth century, there was an average of one school for every 300 Russians, but the average for the native inhabitants was one for every 4,800 Georgians, one for every 5,400 Armenians and one for every 17,300 Azerbaijanians. Instruction in elementary schools was conducted exclusively in Russian. There were villages in which the entire population was illiterate. There were no higher educational establishments.

To crush the movement for national liberation the tsarist authorities incited the various nationalities against each other. In Transcaucasia the tsarist police systematically fomented national strife between Armenians and Azerbaijanians. The Minister of the Interior Plehve took a direct hand in instigating bloody pogroms against the Jews. In April 1903 the police organized a frightful pogrom against the Jews in Kishinev. This crime of the tsarist clique evoked the loud protest of progressive people all over the world.

Finland was deprived of her autonomy. By a law passed in 1901 Finns were conscripted for the Russian army and the Finnish national units were abolished. Russian officials were appointed to all administrative posts in Finland and they pursued a policy of Russification. In its struggle against the movement of the Finnish people for national liberation the tsarist government relied on the support of the Finnish and Swedish feudal landlords in Finland. The working-class movement in Finland was led by the Finnish Social-Democratic Party, of which the policy was similar to that of the Russian Mensheviks, and which was united in a bloc with the Finnish bourgeoisie.

In Poland, in the middle of the 1890's, two nationalist parties were formed: a party of the bourgeoisie and nobility known as the People's Democratic Party ("Narodovtsi") and the petty-bourgeois Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.). Fearing that if Poland became independent the Russian market would be lost for Polish goods and that they would be deprived of the support of Russian tsarism in their struggle against the workers and peasants of Poland, the "Narodovtsi" (known as "Endeki") gave up the demand for independence in favour of autonomy within the Russian empire. The aim of the Polish Socialist Party was to establish a bourgeois Poland independent of Russia.

In Byelorussia a petty-bourgeois party known as the Byelorussian Socialist Gromada was formed and was entirely under the influence

of the P.P.S. It demanded autonomy for Byelorussia and her amalgamation with Lithuania.

In 1897, a Social-Democratic league, known as the Bund, was formed among the Jewish artisans in Poland, Lithuania and Byelorussia. The Bund was represented at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and there it demanded recognition as the sole representative of all the Jewish workers in Russia, no matter where they resided. Had this nationalistic demand been conceded, it would have meant isolating the Jewish proletariat from the Russian proletariat and subordinating it to the influence of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The Second Congress rejected the demand and the Bund withdrew from the Party.

In 1900, thanks to the influence of the Ukrainian nationalist organizations in Western Ukraine, a bourgeois nationalist party was formed in the Ukraine known as the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (R.U.P.). This party demanded Ukrainian independence under the protectorate of Austria.

In Georgia there was a party of Georgian Mensheviks, headed by Noah Jordania, which advocated unity among all Georgians irrespective of the class they belonged to.

All these bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties adopted national-reformist programs, and while striving for increased political rights and privileges for their native landlords and bourgeoisie they fought against the workers and peasants of their respective nations. Only the Bolsheviks led the revolutionary mass struggle of the working people of all the oppressed nationalities in tsarist Russia and demanded the complete abolition of all national oppression. They issued the slogan of the right of nations to self-determination, including the right to secede from tsarist Russia and to form independent states.

The Bolsheviks incessantly maintained that the oppressed nationalities could achieve genuine national liberation only as the result of the overthrow of tsarism and the abolition of the power of the landlords and capitalists. Hence, they called upon the working people of all the nationalities in Russia to rally round the Russian proletariat, the vanguard fighter and leader of the revolutionary struggle of all the numerous nationalities inhabiting Russia. Lenin and Stalin denounced the efforts of the nationalist parties to turn the working people of the oppressed nationalities away from joint struggle with the entire Russian people for democracy and for Socialism.



## *Chapter II*

# THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (1904-1907)

## 5. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

**Preparations for the Russo-Japanese War.** The development of imperialism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century caused an extreme intensification of the struggle among the imperialist countries for a redivision of the world.

Particularly intense became the struggle for the command of the Pacific and for the partition of China, the territory of which had not yet been seized by the imperialists. A participant in this struggle was Russian tsarism, which came into conflict with Japanese imperialism in Manchuria. The beginning of the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway which would greatly strengthen Russia's position in the Far East, prompted Japanese imperialism to make haste to carry out its long cherished designs of armed conquest at the expense of China.

In the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 China was defeated and was compelled to sign a peace treaty which obligated her to pay Japan an enormous indemnity and to cede to her the whole of the south coast of Manchuria, together with Liao-tung Peninsula, including Port Arthur and Korea.

Russia, however, jointly with Germany and France, compelled Japan to modify these oppressive terms and in the end Manchuria with the Liao-tung Peninsula and Port Arthur, and also Korea remained under Chinese rule. In 1896, Witte, the tsar's Minister of Finances, concluded a treaty with China for the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway, which was to run through North Manchuria to shorten the route to Vladivostok. The construction of this railway facilitated the seizure of Manchuria and Korea by tsarist Russia. In 1898 Russia secured a lease of the Liao-tung Peninsula, including Port Arthur, and thus secured an outlet to the China Sea. Measures were taken to speed up the construction of the railway from Harbin through South Manchuria to Port Arthur.

Germany, by an agreement arrived at between Wilhelm II and Nicholas II, occupied the port of Kiaochow. Great Britain occupied the port of Weihaiwei. France rounded off her Indo-Chinese possessions at the expense of China. The United States of America demanded the "open door" in China, that is to say, equal freedom for all the capitalist countries to exploit China.

The systematic plunder of China by the imperialist countries gave rise, in 1900, to a mass popular revolt against the foreign invad-

ers. This revolt was known as the Boxer, or Big Fist, Rebellion. The united forces of the imperialists, including those of tsarist Russia, were flung against the rebels, captured Peking and sacked the city. While crushing the rebellion, tsarist troops, on the pretext of protecting the Chinese Eastern Railway, occupied the whole of Manchuria, which the tsarist high government officials had already given the derisive nickname of "Yellow Russia."

A group of adventurers belonging to the circle that was close to Nicholas II formed a company which obtained a timber concession on the Korean River Yalu bordering on Manchuria. This concession was intended to serve as a *place d'armes* for the seizure of Korea. Port Arthur was converted into a naval fortress and base for the Russian Pacific Fleet, for the construction of which the tsarist government in 1899 allocated 90,000,000 rubles.

Meanwhile, Japan, which in 1902 concluded a military alliance with Great Britain against Russia, was actively preparing for war. Imperialist Japan strove not only to squeeze tsarist Russia out of Korea and Manchuria, but also to seize Sakhalin and the whole of the Russian Far East. British diplomacy set out to activize Russian policy in Europe and in the Near East, where the conflict between the German and Austro-Hungarian imperialists and Russia would inevitably bring about a rapprochement between Russia and Great Britain against Germany. Wilhelm II, in his turn, tried hard to tempt Nicholas II with the prospect of the advantages to be gained from friendship with Germany, in the hope of intensifying Anglo-Russian antagonisms and of destroying the alliance between Russia and France.

Among other things Russian tsarism regarded war as a means of diverting the attention of the workers and peasants of Russia from their real enemies, the landlords and capitalists. The police dictator Plehve said: "To avert a revolution in Russia we need a little victorious war."

**The Outbreak and the Course of the War.** Knowing that Russia was unprepared for war, Japan decided to strike a sudden blow. Spies provided the Japanese High Command with an exact plan of the disposition of the Russian warships in Port Arthur. On the night of January 26, 1904, when the entire commanding personnel of the Russian fleet were at a ball to celebrate the birthday of the wife of Admiral Stark, the Commander-in-Chief, Japanese destroyers, without a declaration of war, stole up under cover of darkness to the outer roadstead of Port Arthur where the Russian squadron was lying at anchor, and blew up three of the finest Russian warships; the battleships *Retvizan* and *Cesarevich* and the cruiser *Pallada*. In the morning of January 27 the Japanese bombarded Port Arthur from the sea and damaged four more warships. That same day a Japanese squadron damaged two Russian warships that were trying heroically to

fight their way out of the Korean port of Cho-mul-po into the open sea. Notwithstanding the severe damage inflicted upon them, the two ships—the cruiser *Varyag* and the gunboat *Koreyetz*—entered into unequal combat with the Japanese squadron and perished heroically off the Korean coast. After weakening the Russian fleet by this treacherous attack, Japan secured command of the sea.

Japan had prepared herself well for war. She secured for herself international sympathy, assistance from the U.S.A. in protecting her rear, and financial assistance from her ally, Great Britain. German instructors helped to train the Japanese army, which was equipped with weapons of German pattern: machine guns and rifles, field and mounted artillery, and heavy Krupp siege guns.

Hostilities on land did not commence immediately on the outbreak of war. Japan's main object was to destroy the Russian fleet and gain complete command of the sea routes. She therefore tried to isolate the Vladivostok squadron from the Port Arthur squadron and to impose a complete blockade upon Port Arthur. Meanwhile, the Russian High Command slowly mustered its forces in Manchuria. The transportation of troops, arms, ammunition and provisions tens of thousands of kilometres across the Great Siberian Road was a long and difficult task. The railway ended at Lake Baikal and men and freight had to be shipped across in boats or icebreakers, and further on Russian carts and horses had to struggle over the bad roads of Manchuria.

The army lacked mountain artillery and grenades, there was a shortage of machine guns, rifles and shells, and telegraph and telephone communication were extremely poor.

From the very beginning of the war tsarist Russia sustained defeat after defeat. General Kuropatkin, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian land forces, carried with him to the front several carloads of small icons which he distributed among the troops to raise their spirits, but there was a shortage of shells with which to conduct the war. The aims of the war were alien to the soldiers who had been transported 10,000 versts from the heart of Russia. All this made the war extremely unpopular.

After the first battles the Russian squadron found itself shut up in Port Arthur; the Japanese warships blockaded the port from the sea. The other small cruiser squadron was in Vladivostok, cut off from Port Arthur.

The talented Admiral Makarov was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet in Port Arthur. The son of a sailor, his promotion was due entirely to his outstanding military capabilities. In Port Arthur he worked successfully to improve the fighting efficiency of the fleet with the object of engaging the Japanese; but on March 31, 1904, as the fleet was putting out to meet the enemy, his flagship, the battleship *Petropavlovsk*, struck a mine and sank. Makarov perished

together with 500 of the 700 men who constituted the crew. The famous Russian battle scene painter V. V. Vereshchagin, who was on board the *Petropavlovsk* at the time, perished too.

In April 1904, in a battle on the river Yalu near Chiu-Lien-Ch'eng, a Russian force of 20,000 men that was barring the Japanese advance into Manchuria was defeated. In May the Japanese cut the lines of communication between Port Arthur and Manchuria and the fortress was thus invested on both land and sea. A Japanese army of 80,000 men conducted operations against Port Arthur and another army moved north into Manchuria. In August 1904 the Russian fleet that was blockaded in Port Arthur left the fortress and engaged the Japanese fleet in an endeavour to break through to Vladivostok. At first the battle went in favour of the Russians, but in the end the numerical superiority of the Japanese forces told and part of the fleet returned to Port Arthur, while those vessels which succeeded in breaking through made for neutral ports.

In August 1904, a battle lasting several days was fought near Liao-Yang. The Russian troops repulsed all the furious attacks launched by the Japanese upon the main Liao-Yang positions. The Japanese command was already preparing to retreat southward when Kuropatkin, having received false information to the effect that the Japanese were outdanking the Russian army on the left, himself ordered a retreat in spite of the fact that he still had two fresh army corps in reserve, whereas the Japanese had already expended all their reserves.

In September and October 1904, a second big battle took place near the river Shaho which lasted for nearly two weeks. The Russian troops held their position, but this time too the Russian Command failed to take advantage of the situation to achieve victory.

Port Arthur continued its resistance for eleven months. The defence of the fortress was organized by the talented General Kondratenko, a military engineer, who was appointed chief of the land defence. On his initiative improved fortifications and blindages were erected and the manufacture of grenades and observation balloons was organized on the spot. The guns and ammunition were removed from the sunken warships and utilized for the land defences, and the crews of these ships were transferred to the land. General Kondratenko appreciated the enormous political and military importance of Port Arthur and devoted all his skill and resourcefulness to the task of holding it. He was popular among the soldiers, roused their fighting spirit, and awarded military decorations to those who displayed heroism. General Stessel, the Commander-in-Chief of the fortress, however, proved to be a traitor and did all in his power to hinder the defence. On December 20, 1904, he treacherously surrendered Port Arthur. During the period of the siege the defenders of the fortress inflicted

heavy casualties upon the enemy amounting to about 130,000 killed and wounded. Considerable damage was also inflicted upon the Japanese coastal fleet by the Russian coastal artillery and mines.

In this war too the Russian soldiers and sailors displayed heroism and high fighting qualities. Characteristic of this was the case that occurred in February 1904, when the destroyer *Steregushchi* engaged four Japanese destroyers and cruisers and sank one of them. On being called upon to surrender the crew refused. When the Japanese ships closed in on the vessel in order to capture it, two sailors whose names have remained unknown, ran below and opened the valves and thus flooded the ship to prevent it falling into the hands of the enemy. A monument to the memory of these two heroes of the *Steregushchi* now stands in Leningrad. Many feats of heroism were performed by the soldiers and sailors in the battles of Shaho, Liao-Yang and Mukden and during the defence of Port Arthur, but the blunders of the commanders nullified the heroic efforts of the army and fleet.

**Significance of the Fall of Port Arthur.** The fall of Port Arthur signified the inglorious end of the war against Japan, although the tsarist government still made efforts to continue it. Tsarist Russia had held Port Arthur for six years and had spent millions of rubles on its fortification, but this stronghold was captured within a few months.

The condition of the army and the situation on the various fronts were a reflection of the general rottenness of the tsarist regime. General Grippenburg, the commander of one of the armies, after losing a battle, deserted the army and fled to St. Petersburg. Other generals were concerned only with their own welfare. General Stackleberg, while at the front, thought more of his own comfort than of anything else. He had a special freight car attached to his train in which he kept a cow so that he might have fresh cream with his morning coffee. The officers of the army were no better. The Commander-in-Chief Kuropatkin wrote concerning them: "Large numbers of officers are tired of the war, and many of them, even those of high rank, feign sickness and try to get sent to the rear." In speaking of the rank and file, Kuropatkin could not help admitting that "the war is alien to them." Embezzlement, theft and corruption were rife in the army. The military equipment of the tsarist army was far inferior to that of the Japanese. Port Arthur did not even have a radio telegraph, although it had been invented by the Russian scientist A. S. Popov as far back as 1895. A whole series of available military inventions were not employed in the tsarist army. The army and its rear teemed with Japanese spies and saboteurs. Certain Polish socialists rendered Japan direct assistance by acting as spies for her, and a similar role was played by certain members of the Finnish bourgeoisie who received financial assistance from Japan.

In an article entitled "The Fall of Port Arthur" published on January 1, 1905, Lenin, summing up the military and political bankruptcy of tsarism, wrote: "The fleet and the fortress, the field fortifications and the land forces proved to be obsolete and useless.

"The connection between the military organization of the country and its entire economic and cultural system has never been so close as it is at the present time" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 48).

Lenin drew the conclusion that the military defeat of Russia must become the starting point of a revolutionary crisis in the country and that the capitulation of Port Arthur was the prologue to the capitulation of tsarism. He directly connected the further development of the revolution with the defeat of tsarism. "The cause of Russian freedom and of the struggle of the Russian (and world) proletariat for Socialism," he wrote, "depends on the military defeats suffered by the autocracy" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 49). He called upon the revolutionary proletariat tirelessly to oppose the war. In this predatory and shameful war, Lenin and the Bolsheviks stood for the defeat of the tsarist government, for such a defeat would facilitate the victory of the revolution over tsarism.

Comrade Stalin urged the need for the defeat of Russian tsarism in this war. In one of the leaflets he wrote against the war, he said: "We want this war to be more lamentable for the Russian autocracy than was the Crimean War. . . . Then it was serfdom that fell, now, as a result of this war, we will bury the child of serfdom—the autocracy and its foul secret police and gendarmes!" (Beria, *On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia*, Moscow, 1939, p. 45.)

**The Revolutionary Crisis on the Eve of 1905.** The Russo-Japanese War greatly aggravated the economic situation in Russia. The war called for the expenditure of enormous funds, and this expenditure was met by foreign loans obtained on exorbitant terms and by the raising of indirect taxes. As a consequence the cost of living rose considerably. The calling up of the reserves for the army struck a heavy blow at the peasant farms, for it deprived them of manpower.

The industrial crisis became more acute, particularly in the textile industry. The capitalists cut wages. Strikes became more frequent.

The growth of the working-class movement and the defeat tsarism suffered in the Far East revived the opposition of the liberal bourgeoisie, because, for one thing, they were afraid that the government would not be able to cope with the growing working-class and peasant movement. In 1904, Finnish nationalists assassinated Bobrikov, the dictator of Finland. In July of that year Socialist-Revolutionaries assassinated Plehve. After its defeat in the battle of Liao-

Yang the tsarist government tried to win over to its side the moderate liberals, particularly the Zemstvo liberals, and in November 1904, it sanctioned the convocation of a Zemstvo congress. The majority at this congress expressed itself in favour of the establishment of a parliament with legislative powers; the minority wanted a parliament with only advisory powers. The Zemstvo liberals believed that the tsar would assemble the representatives of the Zemstvos and town councils, who in their turn would form a parliament.

The Zemstvo liberals and bourgeois intellectuals began to organize banquets at which, proposing toasts drunk in champagne, they timidly expressed the desire to receive political rights. The Mensheviks supported these political banquets, but the Bolsheviks denounced the traitorous conduct of the liberals and the policy of compromise pursued by the Mensheviks. In a pamphlet he wrote entitled *The Zemstvo Campaign and the Iskra Plan*, Lenin pointed out that the main task of the proletariat was not to influence the liberals, but to prepare for a decisive battle against tsarism. He called upon the workers to arm and prepare for insurrection.

In November and December 1904, the Bolsheviks organized street demonstrations in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkov and other cities under the slogans of "Down with the autocracy!" "Down with the war!"

In that same year the Bolsheviks in Transcaucasia developed considerable activity under Comrade Stalin's leadership. In December 1904, Comrade Stalin led a huge strike of the oil workers in Baku which lasted from December 13 to the end of the month and involved 8,300 workers employed in 21 plants. The Baku proletarians drew up a series of demands which in the beginning of 1905 became the militant program of all the revolutionary workers of Russia. At the head of this list were the demands for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly and for an 8-hour working day. During the strike the workers held numerous demonstrations under the slogans: "Down with the autocracy!", "Down with the war!"

The police tried to disrupt the strike by fomenting national strife between the Azerbaijan and Armenian workers, but all their efforts in this direction failed.

The Baku strike ended in a brilliant victory for the workers. For the first time in the history of Russia the workers compelled the capitalists to conclude a collective agreement concerning the hiring of workers. The agreement established a 9-hour day (eight hours on the eve of holidays). "The Baku strike," wrote Comrade Stalin, "was the signal for the glorious actions in January and February all over Russia" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, p. 56).

At the end of 1904, the government, in its decree of December 12,



Putilov Strikers at the Factory Gates in January 1905

promised to make some slight concessions, but declared that it would not permit any changes in the autocratic state system. But tsarism was incapable of averting the revolution.

## 6. JANUARY 9, 1905—THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLUTION

**Bloody Sunday.** The approach of the revolution compelled the tsarist government to seek every possible means of diverting the workers from the political struggle. One of their instruments for the achievement of this object was the priest Gapon, an agent provocateur, who, on the instruction of the secret police, attempted to repeat the Zubatov experiment and in 1904 formed the Assembly of Russian Factory Workers. This association organized promonarchist lectures, theatrical performances and concerts for workers.

On January 3, 1905, the management of the Putilov Works (now the Kirov Works) discharged four workers. Next day 12,000 of their fellow-employees came out on strike in protest against these dismissals. The workers of other plants in St. Petersburg joined the strike and on January 8 the strike became a general one, involving 150,000 workers.

To keep the workers away from the revolutionary struggle the priest Gapon put forward a treacherous plan to draw up a petition to the tsar in the name of the St. Petersburg workers and to get all



the workers to march in a body to the Winter Palace to present it. He informed the secret police of this plan and the latter approved of it. The government decided to shoot down the workers and to drown the growing revolutionary movement in blood.

The petition read as follows: "We, the workmen of St. Petersburg, our wives, our children and our helpless old parents, have come to Thee, our Sovereign, to seek truth and protection. We are poverty-stricken, we are oppressed, we are burdened with unendurable toil; we suffer humiliation and are not treated like human beings. . . . We have suffered in patience, but we are being driven deeper and deeper into the slough of poverty, lack of rights and ignorance; we are being strangled by despotism and tyranny. . . . Our patience is exhausted. The dreaded moment has arrived when we would rather die than bear these intolerable sufferings any longer. . . ."

Then followed a series of economic and political demands for the workers, chief of which was the demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly.

In the original draft of the petition there were no political demands whatever; they were introduced on the proposal of the Bolsheviks when the petition was discussed at workers' meetings. The Bolsheviks urged the workers to give up the idea of marching in procession to the tsar and told them that freedom could not be obtained by means of petitions, but a large section of the workers still believed in the tsar. "We'll try. The tsar cannot reject our just demands," they said.

Early in the morning on Sunday January 9 (22), 1905, 140,000 workers carrying portraits of the tsar, flags and icons marched to the Winter Palace, chanting prayers on the way.

The tsarist government had decided to greet the workers with bullets and bayonets. The entire city was divided up into military areas, and police, Cossacks and troops were posted everywhere. Troops posted at the city gates began to fire at the workers, to prevent them penetrating into the city. Nevertheless, large numbers of workers reached the Winter Palace Square. The brutal tsarist troops shot down the approaching crowds of peaceful workers, and what is more, picked off children, many of whom were perched on the trees in the Alexander Park adjacent to the square. That day over a thousand workers were killed and over two thousand were wounded. The Bolsheviks marched with the workers and many of them were killed or wounded.

The workers gave to January 9 the name of Bloody Sunday. On that day even the backward workers lost all faith in the tsar. "We have no tsar," said aged workers, destroying the portraits of the tsar that hung in their homes.

The Bolsheviks issued leaflets headed: "To Arms, Comrades!" whereupon the workers raided gunsmiths' shops and work-

shops and seized the arms. In the afternoon of January 9, the first barricades were erected on Vasilyevsky Island, a district of St. Petersburg. The workers said: "The tsar gave it to us; we'll now give it to him!" Collisions with the police occurred in the streets. Cries were raised: "Down with the autocracy!"

On January 9, 1905, the working class received a great lesson in civil war. As Lenin wrote: "... The revolutionary education of the proletariat made more progress in one day than it could have made in months and years of drab, humdrum, wretched existence" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 289).

Lenin heard of the events of Bloody Sunday in Geneva, where he was living at that time in exile. In an article entitled: "The Beginning of the Revolution in Russia," he appraised these events in the following terms: "The eyes of the proletariat of the whole world are turned with feverish impatience towards the proletariat of the whole of Russia. The overthrow of tsarism in Russia, begun so valiantly by our working class, will be the turning point in the history of all countries" (*Ibid.*, p. 292). Lenin called upon the Party and the working class immediately to commence preparations for an armed insurrection.

**Protest Strikes Throughout the Country.** This massacre of the workers by order of the tsar called forth protest strikes all over the country. In January alone 440,000 workers were involved in strikes, compared with only 430,000 throughout the whole of the preceding ten years. As Lenin wrote: "It is this awakening of tremendous masses of the people to political consciousness and revolutionary struggle that marks the historic significance of January 22, 1905" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 2).

On January 11, strikes broke out in Moscow whence they spread to the textile districts around Moscow and to Ivanovo-Voznesensk.

Strikes also broke out in Poland, Finland, the Ukraine, the Caucasus and Siberia. In one of the leaflets he issued in the beginning of 1905, Comrade Stalin wrote that as soon as the signal was heard from St. Petersburg the workers of all nationalities, "as though by common consent, responded with unanimous fraternal greeting to the call of the St. Petersburg workers and boldly challenged the autocracy" (Beria, *On the History of the Bolshevik Organizations in Transcaucasia*, Moscow, 1939, p. 65).

On January 18, a general strike of the Tiflis workers commenced under Comrade Stalin's leadership. Bolshevik agitators distributed among the strikers leaflets in the Georgian, Armenian and Russian languages, calling upon them to prepare for an armed insurrection. In response to the appeal of the Caucasian Federal Committee of the Party, the workers of Baku, Batum, Chiaturi and other industrial centres in Transcaucasia also came out on strike. Everywhere meetings and dem-

onstrations were held, during which there were collisions with the police and troops.

At the head of the revolutionary movement marched the metal workers, and they were followed by workers of the textile and other industries. In declaring their protest strikes, the workers also put forward economic demands. This combination of economic demands with political demands lent the strikes tremendous force.

The massacre of the workers on January 9 roused the indignation among the working people in Western Europe too. The workers of Paris, London, Vienna and Brussels demonstrated outside the Russian embassies, their watchwords being: "Down with tsarism!", "Down with the assassins!" "Long live the revolution!" The workers of France and Italy sent the Russian workers fraternal greetings and promised them their assistance.

**Tsarism and the Bourgeoisie after January 9.** To combat the incipient revolution, the tsar appointed Trepov, formerly Chief of Police in Moscow, Governor General of St. Petersburg. Practically, Trepov became the military dictator; he proclaimed martial law in the capital.

The tsar received a deputation of "workers" who had been especially picked by the police and told them that he believed in the "unshakable devotion of the working people" and therefore "forgave them." This cynical statement of the assassin-tsar roused indignation even among the most backward workers.

In the endeavour to divert the workers from revolution, the tsarist clique resorted to downright deception. In January 1905, a commission was set up, under the chairmanship of Senator Shidlovsky, to inquire into the "causes of the discontent of the workers in the capital."

It was intended to include several representatives of the workers in this commission, in addition to government officials and capitalists. The Mensheviks were ready to act on this tsar's commission, but the workers, on the proposal of the Bolsheviks, boycotted the election of representatives to it. The Bolsheviks took part only in the first stage of these elections in order to put forward political demands. After revolutionary manifestations of the workers, who would have nothing to do with the commission, the government dissolved it.

In the endeavour to split the ranks of the revolutionary workers the tsarist authorities deliberately fomented strife among the various nationalities in Russia. The result of this was the frightful Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre in Baku on February 6 and 7, 1905. This pogrom was stopped by the efforts of the class-conscious workers under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. In February, the police, aided by hired bandits, organized an anti-Jewish pogrom in Feodosia. In Kursk the police beat up high-school students in order to

intimidate the radically-minded youth. But these pogroms and assaults only served to intensify popular hatred of tsarism.

In February 1905, tsarism sustained military defeat in the battle of Mukden. On this occasion, too, the tsarist army command failed to take advantage of a series of partial successes which the Russian troops had achieved in the battle. The Russian army lost 120,000 men (out of a total of 300,000) in killed, wounded and taken prisoner. It was evident that tsarism had lost the war against Japan. Terrified by the steady growth of the revolution, and losing support even among the propertied classes, which did not believe that tsarism was capable of coping with the revolution, the autocracy endeavoured to strike a bargain with the bourgeoisie by offering slight political concessions. In February 1905, a tsar's rescript, addressed to Bulygin, the Minister of the Interior, was promulgated, instructing the latter to convene a conference to draw up a scheme for the establishment of an advisory Duma.

The liberal bourgeoisie readily entered into this deal with the government and submitted its extremely moderate proposals for a constitution. The constitutional proposals of the "Liberation" group and of the Zemstvo congress (held in April 1905), left the monarchist form of government intact and provided for the creation of a two-chamber parliament, the upper chamber to consist of representatives of the propertied classes. The liberals were willing to abandon universal suffrage. At the Zemstvo congress, 54 delegates out of the 120 voted against universal suffrage.

Lenin denounced this "constitutional haggling," as he described this bargaining between the liberals and tsarism, and again and again called upon the workers to prepare for an armed insurrection.

## **7. THE MASS REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN THE SUMMER OF 1905**

The Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. The effect of the disruptive tactics that were pursued by the Mensheviks was that at the decisive stage in the development of the revolution the Party was split in two and lacked a single leadership and a common Party line in tactics. Formally, the Party was united, but actually the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks very much resembled two separate parties, each having its own central body and its own leading newspaper.

For the purpose of drawing up the Party's tactics in the revolution and of setting up leading bodies for the Party, the Bolsheviks convened the Third Congress of the Party. This congress was held in London in April 1905. The Mensheviks convened a conference of their own which was at bottom the party congress of a section that had broken away from the R.S.D.L.P.

Before the Third Congress Lenin wrote a series of articles in the Bolshevik newspaper *Vperyod* (*Forward*) in which he explained the character and the driving forces of the Russian revolution. He said this was the first bourgeois-democratic revolution to take place in the epoch of imperialism. Its main task was to destroy the Russian autocracy and its economic foundation, serf-based landlordism. Hence, the slogans of this revolution were: a democratic republic, confiscation of all landlords' estates and their transfer to the peasants for cultivation, and the introduction of an 8-hour day in industry.

The Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905 differed radically from all bourgeois revolutions that had taken place in Europe. Those revolutions were led by the bourgeoisie; the peasantry constituted the reserves of the bourgeoisie, while the proletariat was still weak and could not act independently. The driving forces of the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution, however, were the proletariat and the peasantry, and its leader was the proletariat. The peasants were the allies of the proletariat, for the proletariat alone could help the peasants to solve the agrarian problem in a revolutionary way. The Russian bourgeoisie was counter-revolutionary; it feared the proletariat and wanted to strike a bargain with tsarism with a view to limiting the political rights and damaging the economic interests of the workers and peasants. It was therefore necessary to isolate the bourgeoisie from the masses of the peasantry and to explain to the latter that the bourgeoisie were their class enemies and that they were opposed to all the fundamental demands of the workers and peasants.

Lenin taught that after overthrowing tsarism, the proletariat would not rest content with this victory, but would utilize it for the purpose of immediately passing, together with the poorest sections of the peasantry, to the socialist revolution. "From the democratic revolution," he wrote, "we shall at once, according to the degree of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat, begin to pass over to the socialist revolution" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 145). Basing itself on Lenin's appraisal of the revolution in Russia, the Third Congress of the Party adopted a resolution "On the Provisional Revolutionary Government," which affirmed that after the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, this provisional revolutionary government would become the organ of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The task of this government was to carry the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia to complete victory. Lenin and Stalin taught that the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of these two classes alone could ensure fundamental revolutionary changes in Russia and help the proletariat to pass on to the socialist revolution.

The Third Congress also laid down the Party's tactics, based on the Bolshevik appraisal of the character and prospects of the revolution. It

resolved to support the agrarian demands of the peasantry, including that for the confiscation of all the landlords' land.

The congress called upon the peasants to set up peasant committees for the purpose of seizing the landlords' land in a revolutionary manner. It particularly emphasized the importance of the general strike as a weapon in the struggle. Urging the necessity of an armed insurrection for the purpose of achieving the victory of the revolution, it called upon the Party organizations to proceed forthwith to prepare for such an insurrection.

The congress elected a Bolshevik Central Committee, headed by Lenin, and adopted the newspaper *Proletary* as the central organ of the Party.

Thus, the Third Congress set up a Bolshevik general staff to lead the revolution, armed the Party with a strategical plan for developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, and formulated the main tactics of the proletarian party in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Herein lies the enormous historical importance of the Third Congress of the Party.

Lenin expounded the Bolshevik tactics in a work of genius *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, which appeared in July 1905.

The Mensheviks and Trotskyite agents of the bourgeoisie tried to frustrate Lenin's plan for developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution.

The view spread by the Mensheviks was that as the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois revolution it must be led by the bourgeoisie, as had been the case previously in the West. The proletariat, asserted the Mensheviks, should ally itself not with the peasantry, but with the liberal bourgeoisie; it should march not at the head of the peasantry, but at the tail of the bourgeoisie.

**Tsushima.** Before Port Arthur fell the Baltic Fleet was sent on a long voyage to the Far East round the coast of Africa.

In an article entitled "A Debacle" Lenin wrote: "A great armada, as huge, as unwieldy, as absurd, as impotent and as monstrous as the entire Russian empire itself, set out on its voyage, squandering heaps of money on coal and maintenance, and evoking universal ridicule in Europe" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 335). This "great armada" was destroyed by the Japanese fleet on May 14, 1905 (the anniversary of the coronation of Nicholas II) in a battle off the island of Tsushima, in the Korea Straits.

In this unequal battle, which was more like a massacre, the Russian sailors fought with unexampled staunchness and courage. The obsolete cruiser *Dimitri Donskoy* bravely held at bay ten up-to-date Japanese cruisers and put two of them out of action. It was called upon to sur-

render, but it refused, and continuing to bombard the enemy, it proudly sank into the depths of the sea.

**The Revolutionary Struggle of the Proletariat in the Summer of 1905.** The defeat which tsarism sustained at Tsushima gave an added impetus to the proletarian revolutionary struggle. Strikes broke out continuously all through the spring, summer and autumn. Economic strikes became interwoven with political strikes and developed into mass revolutionary strikes. The first strike wave (January to April) affected 659,400 workers. The second (in the spring of 1905) affected 362,600 workers. The third, covering the period from July to September, affected 264,800 workers.

The First of May celebrations were accompanied by strikes affecting 220,000 workers and developed into a huge demonstration against the autocracy.

The vanguard of these political strikes and demonstrations consisted of the metal workers. The textile workers at first organized mainly economic strikes, but gradually they too entered the political struggle. A vivid example of this is provided by the strike of the textile workers in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. It began on May 12, 1905, with the presentation of economic demands and soon affected the whole of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk textile region. The strike lasted a long time and about 70,000 workers, including many women, were involved. To lead the strike a Joint Strike Committee was elected in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. This committee was called Council of Representatives, and it was in fact the first Soviet of Workers' Deputies in history. This council formed a workers' militia to guard the textile mills, established a strike fund to assist the families of strikers, demanded the closing of vodka shops, undertook the supply of provisions for the workers and made arrangements for this purpose with the shopkeepers, and maintained order and discipline among the strikers. The strikers usually assembled on the bank of the river Talka to hear reports from members of the council on the progress of the strike. Here they also discussed political questions, and after the meetings they learned and sang revolutionary songs. One of their favourite speakers was the Bolshevik worker Dunayev. The general direction of the strike came from the Northern Committee of the Party, headed by Comrade Frunze and Fyodor Afanasyev, an old weaver who had been one of the speakers at the First of May demonstration in St. Petersburg in 1891, and who was known as "Father."

These meetings were broken up by the police and troops, and in the collisions scores of workers were killed and many wounded. The workers remained staunch, however, and continued the strike. Hunger alone compelled them to return to work, and this they did in an organized manner.

This strike steeled the workers; it served as a militant school for their political education. In a leaflet they issued at the end of the

strike, the Social-Democratic workers summed up the struggle as follows: "The strike has taught us a great deal. Before it many of us were so ignorant that we did not want either to understand, to appreciate or to think about our conditions.... Do we not now see who is helping our enemies, the masters? We have realized that as long as power is in the hands of the tsar, who thinks only about the capitalists, we shall never be able to improve our conditions."

A determined struggle against tsarism was also waged by the workers in the industrial towns of Poland. The general strike which broke out in Lodz in June 1905, developed into an armed clash. Barricades were erected in the streets and for three days a regular battle was fought between the workers and the tsar's troops. Lenin regarded the Lodz battles as the first armed action of the workers of Russia. In August a collision between police and demonstrators occurred in Byelostok, during which thirty-six persons were killed and many were wounded. The strikers took to arms to wage a determined struggle against tsarism.

Thus, in the course of the strike movement the conditions were created for passing to the highest form of struggle—armed insurrection. The bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905 was proletarian both in the methods by which the struggle was conducted and in the fact that the proletariat played the leading role in it.

**The Peasant Movement.** The strikes of the industrial workers after Bloody Sunday stimulated the revolutionary movement in the rural districts. In the beginning of 1905, the Bolsheviks conducted extensive propaganda work among the peasants and widely distributed leaflets among them. The peasant movement broke out almost simultaneously in the central regions of Russia, in Georgia and in the Baltic Provinces. In February 1905, the peasants in the Orel, Kursk, Chernigov and other gubernias began to seize the landlords' estates. In the spring of 1905, the mass peasant movement began to spread all over the country. The peasants wrecked landlords' mansions, seized their meadows and hay crops, and ploughed up their lands. Often, at night, the tocsin was sounded, or a haystack burst into flames—this was the signal for gen-



F. A. Afanasyev ("Father")



eral action. Hundreds of peasants, armed with axes and clubs, marched to the landlord's estate, tore off the locks of the granary and took the corn, shared among themselves the landlord's cattle and poultry, wrecked the estate offices and burnt the office books, particularly the records of the peasants' debts and obligations. They burnt the landlord's mansion and farm buildings so that the landlord should have no place to return to. In most cases this movement bore a spontaneous character.

The Third Congress of the Party called upon the Party organizations to conduct activities among the peasants, to help them in their struggle and to back their demands for the confiscation of the landlords' land. The Party advised the peasants to seize the landlords' lands, to expel the tsar's officials and to set up their own peasant committees, which were to be the embryo of the new revolutionary authority in the countryside.

The struggle that was waged by the peasants in Guria under the leadership of the Bolsheviks was exceptionally determined and organized. Comrade Stalin had conducted Social-Democratic activities among the Georgian peasants, particularly the Gurian and Ajar peasants, as early as 1902. The tsarist authorities had deported many of the participants in the Batum strikes and demonstrations of 1902 to their homes in Guria. On arriving home the deportees formed Social-Democratic organizations and under the leadership of these organizations the Gurian peasants began to drive out the tsar's officials, refused to pay taxes and boycotted the tsar's courts. All disputes that arose were tried by elected people's courts.

In March 1905, the tsar's government sent General Alikhanov-Avasky to Guria with a force of 10,000 men of all arms to suppress the revolt. At the same time a high official was sent to investigate the causes of the revolt. The peasants everywhere presented the same demands to this official. The delegates from the village of Hidistavi said: "Our demands can be expressed in three words: we want bread, justice and freedom. We are not asking for baked bread, all that we are asking is that we should be allowed to enjoy the fruits of our labour." In another village a peasant delegate delivered an impassioned political speech in the course of which he said: "We expect nothing from the government. We know very well how cruelly it treated the St. Petersburg workers. We are not so naive as to place any hopes in the government after these atrocities."

The punitive expedition headed by Alikhanov-Avasky failed to pacify Guria. At the Third Congress of the Party the delegate from the Caucasian Social-Democratic Federation, which was led by Comrade Stalin, proudly related the story of the heroic struggle that was being waged by the Gurian peasants. The Gurian peasant movement was the most organized and most politically-conscious peasant movement in

Russia. The revolutionary struggle of the Abkhazian peasants in Gudauti was led by Orjonikidze.

During the spring ploughing, strikes broke out among the agricultural labourers. These strikes assumed particularly wide dimensions in Latvia, Estonia, Poland, and Byelorussia. The Latvian and Estonian labourers drove out the landlords, seized their estates and ploughed up the land for themselves.

In the summer of 1905, the All-Russian Peasant Union was formed. Notwithstanding the fact that the Socialist-Revolutionaries and liberals had succeeded in capturing the central leadership of this Peasant Union, Lenin held that it was of great importance for the organization of the peasants. "... Before the victory of the peasant insurrection, and for such a victory, the Peasant Union is a powerful and vital organization," he wrote. (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 129.)

The peasants joined the Union in whole villages. The Socialist-Revolutionaries wanted to subordinate the peasant movement to the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but the Bolsheviks combated their efforts to do so. The peasant movement did not, however, spread all over the country at that time; in the spring of 1905 it had developed in only 85 counties, one-seventh of the total number of counties in Russia.

**The Revolt on the Battleship *Potemkin*.** Tsarism had but one prop left—the armed forces; but the defeat in the war and the revolutionary struggle that was being waged by the workers and peasants stimulated revolutionary temper in the army and in the navy. The revolt of the crew of the battleship *Potemkin* of the Black Sea Fleet clearly revealed that even this prop of tsarism was shaken. The sailors of the navy, among whom there were many industrial workers, were the most class-conscious and revolutionary section of the armed forces.

In 1905 the Bolsheviks made energetic preparations for a general revolt in the Black Sea Fleet which was timed to break out during the assembly of the fleet for training purposes at the Island of Tendra, between Odessa and Sevastopol. The revolt on the *Potemkin*, however, broke out spontaneously on June 14, 1905, before the whole fleet had assembled. Its immediate cause was the issue to the men of borshch cooked with decayed meat that teemed with maggots. The crew refused to eat the borshch. The commander assembled the ringleaders, ordered a tarpaulin to be thrown over them and then ordered them to be shot. In protest against this order the whole crew mutinied. A collision occurred between the officers and the men during which the sailor Vakulinchuk, the leader of the mutiny, was killed by a senior officer. The leadership passed to another revolutionary sailor named Matyushenko. The men killed many of the officers and seized the battleship.

The *Potemkin* made for Odessa where a general strike was in progress. The arrival of the revolutionary battleship flying the red flag stimulated the workers of Odessa to rise in armed revolt against tsarism, but the Mensheviks sabotaged the revolt and prevented the crew of the *Potemkin* from landing a party to assist the workers. The tsarist government ordered the whole of the remaining part of the Black Sea Fleet to attack the *Potemkin*. The revolutionary battleship went out boldly to meet the fleet with the red flag at its masthead. The gunners of the other ships refused to fire at the *Potemkin*, and one battleship, the *Georgi Pobedonosyets*, went over to its side. The petty officers on this ship, however, intimidated and demoralized the crew by assuring them that the revolt was hopeless. They ran the battleship aground and the *Potemkin* continued to fight alone.

The revolutionary warship sailed the Black Sea with the red flag at its masthead for a whole week, but failing to receive support from the shore owing to the treachery of the Mensheviks, and running short of coal and provisions, it was obliged to make for the Rumanian coast and surrender to the Rumanian authorities. The latter, in 1906, handed the revolutionary sailors over to the tsarist authorities, who had them either executed or sentenced to penal servitude.

Lenin attributed immense importance to the revolt on the *Potemkin*. "For the first time," he wrote, "an important unit of the armed forces of tsarism—an entire battleship—has openly gone over to the side of the revolution" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 311).

As soon as he received the first news of the revolt on the *Potemkin*, Lenin sent a Bolshevik to Odessa to give it guidance, but he arrived too late. The ship had already left for Rumania.

The revolutionary movement in the army and in the navy continued to grow. In 1905, cases of mutiny among the reserves increased and not infrequently these were accompanied by the killing of officers. This unrest revealed that the rank and file of the army were wavering and were becoming an unreliable prop for the autocracy. The Bolsheviks formed military revolutionary organizations for the purpose of conducting activities in the army with the object of uniting the soldiers with the workers and peasants and of leading them on to the armed insurrection against tsarism.

## 8. THE OCTOBER GENERAL STRIKE

**The Bulygin Duma.** The rising tide of the revolutionary movement in the country forced the tsarist clique to manœuvre. It was compelled, while continuing its policy of repression, to take a step towards meeting the wishes of the bourgeoisie who, in their turn, were seeking an alliance with it. In other words, it was obliged to strike

a bargain with the bourgeoisie. With this object the tsar's government, on August 6, 1905, passed a law for the convocation of a State Duma. In conformity with this law the proposed State Duma was to be not a legislative but an advisory body; it was to have the right to express an opinion on the bills submitted to it by the government, but not to pass or reject them. Thus, the law of August 6 left the autocratic system completely intact. This Duma was referred to as the Bulygin Duma, after Bulygin, the Minister who had drafted the law. The landlords, who were an insignificant minority in the country, were to receive 85 per cent of all the seats. The workers were given no electoral rights at all. The bourgeoisie welcomed this Bulygin Duma and called upon the people to take an active part in the elections. The Mensheviks supported the liberals. The Bolsheviks alone called upon the people to boycott the elections to the Bulygin Duma. The further development of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, led by the Bolsheviks, prevented the convocation of this Duma.

**The Peace of Portsmouth.** After the rout of the tsar's fleet at Tsushima, the international bourgeoisie, fearing the further growth of the revolution in Russia, strongly urged the tsar's government to conclude peace. In their opinion peace with Japan would help to restore "internal peace" in Russia, particularly if the tsarist government made some moderate constitutional concessions to the people. On the other hand, the United States was apprehensive that Japan would become too strong and therefore urged the Japanese government to moderate its demands upon Russia.

Greatly exhausted and weakened by the war, Japan herself was interested in the speedy conclusion of peace.

At Japan's request, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, acted as mediator in the negotiations between Russia and Japan.

To discuss the situation the tsar's government, on May 24 (June 6), 1905, called a council of war over which the tsar presided. The majority of those present at the council were in favour of concluding peace. "Internal well-being is more important for us than victory. We are living in an abnormal condition: we must restore to Russia her internal repose," they said.

The government consented to open peace negotiations and appointed a peace delegation, headed by Count Witte, who enjoyed the confidence of the bourgeois governments of Europe and America. The peace negotiations were opened in the small town of Portsmouth, Maine, in the United States.

Japan presented very harsh peace terms. She demanded the Liao-tung Peninsula, the South Manchurian Railway up to Harbin, the Island of Sakhalin, and complete control of Korea. In addition, she counted on receiving a large indemnity from Russia.

The Russian delegation had received instructions not to yield an inch of territory to the Japanese and not to agree to the payment of any indemnities. The discussion of the peace treaty became extremely protracted. Roosevelt now exerted pressure upon the Japanese and now upon the Russian delegation, urging them to make mutual concessions. At last, on August 23 (September 5), 1905, the peace treaty was signed.

Tsarist Russia recognized Japan's predominant economic, military and political interests in Korea, ceded to Japan her lease of Port Arthur and Dalni, pledged herself to run the Chinese Eastern Railway exclusively for commercial purposes and ceded to Japan the southern part of Sakhalin, with all its adjacent islands. In addition, she concluded a disadvantageous fishing convention with Japan. "As we know," said Comrade Stalin in an address to the people on September 2, 1945, "in the war against Japan, Russia was defeated. Japan took advantage of the defeat of tsarist Russia to seize from Russia the southern part of Sakhalin and establish herself on the Kuril Islands, thereby putting the lock on all our country's outlets to the ocean in the East, which meant also all outlets to the ports of Soviet Kamchatka and Soviet Chukotka. It was obvious that Japan was aiming to deprive Russia of the whole of her Far East" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, pp. 208-209).

As Comrade Stalin observed in the same speech, the defeat of tsarist Russia in 1904-1905 "... lay like a black stain upon our country. Our people believed in and waited for the day when Japan would be defeated and the stain would be wiped out."

The war with Japan cost the Russian people dear: 400,000 men were killed, wounded and taken prisoner, and the expenditure amounted to over 3,000,000,000 rubles.

The conclusion of peace with Japan was of considerable assistance to the tsarist clique in its further struggle against the revolution. But the revolution was not to be halted. In the autumn and winter of 1905 the revolutionary movement rose to its peak.

**The All-Russian Political Strike.** On September 19, 1905, a general printers' strike broke out in Moscow. The bakers, tobacco workers and workers in other trades joined the printers. Cossacks and gendarmes broke up revolutionary demonstrations. The workers fired at the police with revolvers and wounded many of them. On September 25 a regular battle was fought in Tverskaya Street (now Gorky Street) outside Philippov's bakery. A troop of Cossacks charged the crowd that was blocking the street. The workers rushed into the bakery, climbed to the roof of this tall building and from there pelted the troops with stones. The troops surrounded the whole block where the bakery was situated and laid regular siege to it. Eventually, two companies of infantry got in through the back of the house where the workers had not placed a



The All-Russian Strike in October 1905. *From a painting by Savitsky*

ward. Two of the workers were killed, eight were wounded and 192 were arrested.

The September strikes in Moscow raised the struggle to a higher stage. Lenin stated that the events in Moscow marked the beginning of the insurrection. "The outbreak of the insurrection has been crushed in vain. Again: long live the insurrection!" he wrote (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 282).

On October 7, the railwaymen on the Moscow-Kazanskaya Railway went on strike, and on October 8, the men on all the other railways in Russia joined them. On October 11, the railway strike developed into a nation-wide general strike in which the workers of all trades were involved. The intelligentsia—schoolteachers, office employees, lawyers, engineers and students—joined the workers. The strikers demanded the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. The tsar's government tried to suppress the strike by armed force. On October 14, Trepov, the Governor General of St. Petersburg and virtual dictator of Russia, issued an order: "Don't fire blank shot; spare no bullets." But the government was already powerless to stop the strike.

Nearly a million industrial workers, not counting railwaymen, and several hundred thousand office employees, were involved in the Octo-

her political strike. The entire economic life of the country was brought to a standstill. Trains and ships stopped running, factories were idle, the post and telegraph ceased to function, no newspapers or magazines appeared. In the towns street traffic ceased, shops and restaurants were closed. The universities and high schools were closed. Only the water supply, city drainage and the hospitals functioned by order of the strike committees. On the railways only troop trains which were carrying demobilized soldiers who were hurrying home from Manchuria were allowed to run.

The October strike paralyzed the forces of the government and at the same time demonstrated the strength of the proletariat as the vanguard fighter and organizer of the nation-wide struggle against the autocracy. In a number of localities the general strike began to develop into armed insurrection.

In Kharkov barricades were erected around the University and as many as a thousand armed workers mustered to defend them. In the streets collisions occurred with troops. Artillery was called out. During the storming of the barricades and in street fighting 147 workers were killed.

In Ekaterinoslav the entire population of the working-class suburb of Chocholevka took part in building barricades. They threw down telegraph poles and erected barbed-wire entanglements. The barricades were demolished by troops. Collisions with troops also occurred in Odessa, Saratov, Rostov and other cities.

The strike wave (the fourth in that year) reached its peak in the autumn and in the beginning of the winter of 1905. While about a million workers were involved in October, in December only several hundred thousand were affected.

**The Tsar's Manifesto of October 17.** Scared by the general strike, the tsar, on October 17, issued a manifesto, which had been drawn up by Count Witte who, shortly before that, had been appointed Chairman of the Council of Ministers. In this manifesto the tsar promised to grant freedom of speech, press, association and assembly, extension of the franchise, etc. The State Duma was proclaimed a legislative body. But this manifesto was only intended to deceive the masses. The tsar hoped by means of it to gain time to muster his forces for the purpose of crushing the revolution. In appraising the tsar's manifesto, and uttering a warning against exaggerating its importance, Lenin wrote: "The tsar's concession is indeed a very great victory for the revolution, but this victory does not yet by a long way decide the fate of the entire cause of freedom. The tsar has not yet by any means capitulated. The autocracy has not yet ceased to exist. It has only retreated. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 352.)

The manifesto of October 17 fully satisfied the bourgeoisie who, frightened by the nation-wide strike and the incipient insurrection,

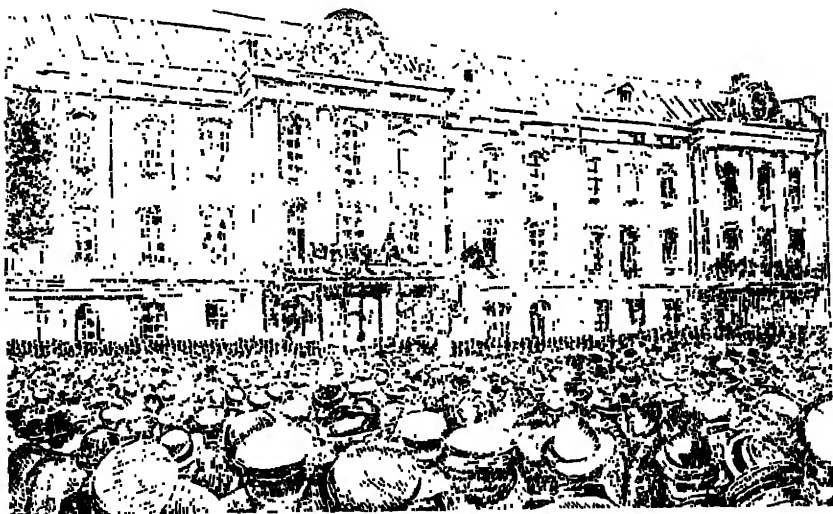
began openly to oppose the revolutionary masses. The big industrial and commercial bourgeoisie formed an organization called the Union of October Seventeenth (known as the Octobrists). The Right-wing Zemstvo-ites and the various commercial and industrial "parties" that sprang up in 1905 joined this organization.

The liberal Zemstvo-ites and the members of the Emancipation League officially inaugurated the already legally existing Constitutional-Democratic Party (known as the Cadets). The Cadets expressed the strivings of those sections of the bourgeoisie which were less interested than the Octobrists in feudal methods of exploitation. Unlike the avowedly reactionary Octobrist bourgeoisie, the Cadets tried to manoeuvre between the revolution and the autocracy. When the tsar's manifesto was promulgated, the Cadets declared the revolution at an end and called for co-operation with the Witte government.

The Mensheviks were also pleased with the manifesto of October 17. The leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks in Tiflis even stated at meetings: "There is no longer an autocracy, the autocracy is dead. Russia is entering the ranks of constitutional monarchist states."

Comrade Stalin emphatically denounced this piece of Menshevik deception. On the day the manifesto of October 17 was promulgated he said at a meeting in Tiflis: "What do we need in order to really win? We need three things: first—arms, second—arms, third—arms and arms again."

The Bolsheviks urged the masses to place no confidence in the tsar's manifesto and to prepare for armed insurrection.



Mass Meeting Outside the St. Petersburg University in October 1905



Stricken by mortal fear of the revolution, Nicholas II began to seek support in Kaiser Germany and among the Baltic German barons. During the general strike of October 1905 several German destroyers appeared in the roadstead off Peterhof with the object of taking Nicholas II and his family to Germany in the event of the revolution being victorious. At this time the tsarist government conducted negotiations with Germany for intervention in Russia for the purpose of suppressing the revolution and of restoring tsarist absolutism. This conspiracy against the revolution was exposed and frustrated by the proletariat of St. Petersburg.

In Poland martial law was declared as a consequence of the growth of the revolutionary movement. German troops were moved to the Russian frontier in readiness to invade Russia. The proletariat of St. Petersburg retaliated to this threat on the part of German imperialism to intervene in the internal affairs of Russia by declaring a general strike. The result was that martial law in Poland was rescinded and intervention was rendered impossible. The satirical journals at that time published a cartoon depicting the Governor General of Warsaw, Scalone, who was a German, zealously cleaning the boots of an army officer whose face was concealed, but whose figure could be recognized as that of Wilhelm II. The caption to the cartoon read: "Unfortunately we had to rescind martial law, but I shall continue to serve you faithfully and well."

Immediately after the manifesto of October 17 was promulgated revolutionary demonstrations occurred all over Russia. Street meetings were held at which impassioned revolutionary speeches were delivered. To combat the revolution, the government formed a hooligan organization called the Union of Russian People, which united the corrupt Black Hundreds which had already sprung up in many localities in the beginning of 1905.

On the direct instructions of the tsar and the gendarmes the Black Hundreds, jointly with the police, organized Jewish pogroms in over a hundred towns in all parts of the country. Leaflets inciting to pogroms were secretly printed in the printing plants of the Department of Police. During a pogrom in Odessa several thousand Jewish working people were killed. In Tomsk, the Black Hundreds, with the blessing of the Bishop and in the presence of the City Governor, surrounded the railway administration offices where a workers' meeting was taking place and set fire to it. Many of the people present at the meeting perished in the flames, and it was only thanks to the heroic efforts of S. M. Kirov that some of the revolutionaries were saved. In Tver (now Kalinin) the Black Hundreds wrecked the premises of the Tver Zemstvo, which was a liberal body, and killed and injured many members of the Zemstvo staff. In Ivanovo, the Black Hundreds brutally murdered the veteran revolutionary worker and leader of the textile strike, Fyodor Afanasyev,

known as "Father." In Moscow the Black Hundreds arranged the assassination of the prominent Bolshevik N. E. Bauman, who had only just been released from the Taganskaya prison. Bauman's funeral developed into a huge revolutionary demonstration in which several hundred thousand people took part. These arrests, pogroms and assassination of revolutionaries served as striking illustrations of what the masses could expect from the manifesto of October 17. About this manifesto the people sang the ditty:

*"The tsar caught fright, issued a Manifest:  
Liberty for the dead, for the living—arrest."*

**Soviets of Workers' Deputies.** During the stormy days of the October general strike the working class created a new type of revolutionary organization which played a leading role in the revolution. These organizations were the Soviets of Workers' Deputies. On October 13, while the strike was in progress, the workers of St. Petersburg held meetings in their factories and works and elected representatives to a Council (Soviet) of Workers' Deputies for the purpose of leading the strike. Formed originally as a Joint Strike Committee, the St. Petersburg Soviet rapidly became the embryo of a new revolutionary authority. Thus, in November, the Soviet on its own authority proclaimed the introduction of an 8-hour day; it had its own organ, *Izvestia*, which was printed in the biggest printing plants of St. Petersburg and appeared without the sanction of the tsarist censor. The Soviet began to interfere in the orders of the tsarist administration. While the post and telegraph employees were on strike government telegrams were sent off only with the Soviet's sanction. The inhabitants of St. Petersburg came to the Soviet on every kind of business as if it were an official administrative body. Nevertheless, the St. Petersburg Soviet failed to take the lead of the revolution. The reason for this was that, taking advantage of the absence from St. Petersburg of Lenin, who was living abroad in exile, the Mensheviks captured the leadership of the Soviet and did all in their power to prevent it from becoming an organ of revolutionary authority and, in particular, frustrated the preparations for armed insurrection.

Following the example of St. Petersburg, Soviets of Workers' Deputies were formed in all the other big cities of Russia during the period of October to December 1905. The Moscow Soviet was led by Bolsheviks and, as a consequence, it became an organ for the preparation of armed insurrection. In the Caucasus, in Latvia, and also in some parts of Central Russia (the Tver and Moscow Gubernia), representatives of the soldiers, *i. e.*, peasants in military uniform, were members of the Soviets. Thus, Lenin's idea of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry began to take practical shape.

When Lenin returned from abroad and studied the activities of the St. Petersburg Soviet, he pointed out to the Party the world historical importance of the Soviets as the embryo of a new revolutionary popular authority. But in order that the Soviets might play their revolutionary role, he urged, it was necessary to prepare to overthrow the rule of the tsar by organizing an armed insurrection. Further, in the course of the revolution of 1905 the Russian proletariat created a form of organization that was new in the history of the revolutionary movement, a form of organization that was the prototype of Soviet power, the embryonic form of the proletarian socialist state, *i. e.*, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Soviets marked a step forward compared with the Paris Commune of 1871. Comrade Stalin expressed his high appreciation of the historic importance of the Soviets in the revolution of 1905 in the words: "... the movement for the Soviets of Workers' Deputies begun in 1905 by the workers of Leningrad and Moscow led in the end to the rout of capitalism and the victory of Socialism on one-sixth of the globe" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 530).

## 9. THE NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA IN 1905

**Finland's Fight for Autonomy.** The revolutionary movement of the proletariat compelled the tsarist autocracy to make certain concessions on the national question. After Bloody Sunday (January 9) the struggle against tsarism flared up with exceptional vigour in the regions inhabited by the oppressed nationalities. The workers of Helsingfors, the capital of Finland, were among the first to organize a general strike of protest against the atrocities perpetrated by Nicholas II against the workers. The Finnish bourgeoisie and its party of "active resistance" believed that the tsarist autocracy would be compelled by the workers to make concessions and restore the Finnish constitution, which had been abolished in 1902.

The tsar's government, however, made only slight concessions, for it calculated that the Finnish bourgeoisie would readily come to terms in order to wage a joint struggle against the workers. The law of 1901 on compulsory military service was repealed and the regulation on the non-dismissal of judges was re-introduced. But these minor concessions failed to satisfy even the Finnish bourgeoisie. They demanded the restoration of the Finnish Constitution.

The October political strike in Russia was backed by the Finnish worker, who proclaimed a general strike in Finland. They formed a Red Guard and prepared for insurrection.

The nation-wide strike of the working class compelled the tsarist autocracy to yield on the Finnish question as well. On October 22, 1905,

Nicholas II promulgated a manifesto restoring the constitution in Finland. The Finnish bourgeoisie was satisfied with this and began to make preparations for the elections to the new Diet. The Finnish Mensheviks supported the bourgeoisie in everything; they spread constitutional illusions among the masses and assured the workers and peasants that the armed struggle against tsarism was over. Describing the opportunist stand taken by the Finnish Mensheviks during the revolution of 1905, Lenin said that "they are not genuine Social-Democrats."

**The Struggle for National Liberation in Poland.** After January 9, strikes were continuously in progress in Poland. Numerous mass meetings were held in the towns and villages at which resolutions were adopted demanding autonomy for Poland. The peasants refused to pay taxes or perform military service, and expelled the Russian government officials and schoolteachers.

The Polish nobility and the Catholic clergy came out under the leadership of the nationalist parties which advocated the achievement of autonomy for Poland by means of a deal with the Russian bourgeoisie.

In the autumn the national movement in Poland assumed wide dimensions. The population proclaimed a boycott of the tsarist schools, and the educational society known as Matitsa collected voluntary contributions from the people and opened Polish schools. After the October general strike the revolutionary struggle of the Polish people reached the verge of armed insurrection. This frightened the Polish bourgeoisie, who betrayed the movement by entering into an agreement with the Russian liberals.

In the autumn of 1905 the tsarist autocracy proclaimed martial law in Poland, but the political strike proclaimed by the St. Petersburg workers compelled the government to rescind it. This demonstrated to the Polish people that the Russian proletariat alone was their faithful ally.

**The National Movement in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia.** The revolutionary struggle of the workers of the Ukraine and Byelorussia in 1905 developed in complete unison with the struggle waged by the Russian proletariat.

Taking advantage of the weakening of the autocracy as a result of the revolutionary movement, the Ukrainians succeeded in publishing books and newspapers in the Ukrainian language. A section of the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois nationalists who had formed the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (R.U.P.) demanded autonomy for the Ukraine and the transfer of power to an autonomous Ukrainian Sejm. In their program, which did not differ from that of the Constitutional Democrats, they demanded the transfer of the land to the peasants with payment of compensation to the landlords. In addition to the

R.U.P. there were in the Ukraine in 1905 the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Union, the Spilka (League) which was of a Menshevik trend, and the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

The Ukrainian nationalists were actually agents of Austria, which promised to support their struggle for the "independence" of the Ukraine. The nationalist slogans of these separatists (*i. e.*, advocates of secession) found no favour among the Ukrainian workers and peasants who strove for the overthrow of Russian tsarism in fraternal alliance with the Russian workers.

In Byelorussia, the Byelorussian Socialist Gromada, which was supported by the kulak elements of the Byelorussian peasantry, tried to capture the leadership of the national movement. In January 1906, this party held a congress in Minsk at which it demanded autonomy for Byelorussia and the formation of a federation consisting of Byelorussia, Lithuania, Latvia and the Ukraine with a common Sejm in Vilna. This party also demanded the allotment of land to the peasants with payment of compensation to the landlords.

Both in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia an important part in the national movement was played by the schoolteachers who formed their Spilki and Prosvity (cultural and educational societies). The Prosvity distributed literature in the Ukrainian and Byelorussian languages, opened village libraries and reading rooms and organized theatrical performances, concerts and literary evenings. Their main function was to conduct educational work in their native languages.

But these parties and groups could not lead the broad movement for national liberation; they renounced the revolutionary struggle and a fighting alliance with the revolutionary Russian proletariat, and failed to link the aims of the national movement with the struggle for land that was being waged by the peasantry. While proclaiming the slogans of the national movement, they hid from the masses the point that their chief enemy was the tsarist autocracy, which could be overthrown only by the joint efforts of the workers and peasants of all nationalities.

**The Revolutionary Struggle for Liberation of the Peoples of Transcaucasia.** The national movement in Transcaucasia in 1905 assumed a more definitely class and revolutionary character than it did in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia. Thanks to the leadership of the Social-Democratic organization, which had been trained by Comrade Stalin, the workers' and peasants' movement in Georgia, and particularly in Guria, rose to a considerable height. Open preparations for an insurrection against tsarism were made not only in the towns, but also in the rural districts.

All through 1905 mass strikes, demonstrations and meetings took place, funds were collected for revolutionary purposes and "Red Hundreds" and peasant committees were formed in the villages. The

peasants rose in revolt against the landlords and drove them from their estates. The landlords, assisted by the authorities, organized their armed squads known as "Black Hundreds." In many parts of Georgia the inhabitants refused to recognize the tsarist courts and police.

The attempts of the Georgian nationalists, including the Georgian Mensheviks, to capture the leadership of the movement failed. In 1905 the workers and peasants of Georgia followed the lead of the Bolsheviks.

In Azerbaijan the movement for national liberation was led by the Baku Bolsheviks, who formed for this purpose a special organization known as Gummet (energy). This organization conducted extensive activities among the more backward and downtrodden section of the Azerbaijanian workers in Baku. As a result of the educational work conducted by the Bolsheviks, the more class-conscious of the Azerbaijanian workers, jointly with the Russian workers, succeeded, in February 1905, in putting a stop to the Armenian-Azerbaijanian massacres. During the oil workers' strike in August, the majority of the Azerbaijanian workers, for the first time, joined the strike, for they were beginning to understand that a united class movement was needed. The landlords and the rising local bourgeoisie tried to keep the Azerbaijanian workers and peasants away from the revolutionary struggle. Intense religious and nationalist agitation was conducted in the towns and villages by the Pan-Islamists, who advocated the amalgamation of all Moslems in an independent Moslem state which was to be governed by the bourgeois-feudal upper classes and the clergy. This Pan-Islamist agitation received support from Turkey. The Gummet constantly exposed the reactionary plans of the exploiters of the Azerbaijanian people that were covered up by the flag of religion.

In Armenia the bourgeois party known as the Dashnacktsutyun tried to capture the leadership of the movement for national liberation. In the endeavour to obtain the support of the Armenian bourgeoisie and the clergy in the struggle against the revolution in Transcaucasia, the tsar's government repealed the church property law, which limited the revenues of the Armenian Church.

**The National Movement among the Peoples of the Volga Region and Siberia.** The revolution of 1905 roused all the nationalities of Russia to political life. In the Volga Region and in Bashkiria the bourgeois nationalists formed a Moslem League, the object of which was to unite all Moslems. This league also extended its activities to some extent to the Moslem bourgeoisie in Central Asia and in Transcaucasia. A prominent part in this league was played by the mullahs, who fomented religious strife between the Moslem and Russian populations. At the end of 1905 the Tatar bourgeoisie convened in Kazan

the first Moslem congress, which in a loyal petition to the tsar pleaded for the abolition of all Moslem disabilities and for political, religious and civil rights equal to those enjoyed by the Russian population.

The Chuvash national movement in 1905 assumed the purely peasant character of a struggle for land and freedom. Activities among the Chuvash and Mari populations of the Cheboksari district on the Volga were conducted by members of the All-Russian Peasant Union. The peasants at their meetings passed decisions to seize the land of the landlords, and they also demanded the opening of schools to be conducted in their native language. The Buryats continued their struggle against the plunder of their lands by the tsarist government officials. A league of Siberian nationalities was formed. The awakening of the Yakuts was brought about by the Yakut League which was formed in 1905, but which was soon suppressed by the tsarist authorities. Such were the first steps in the awakening to political life of the Siberian peoples who were oppressed and downtrodden by tsarism.

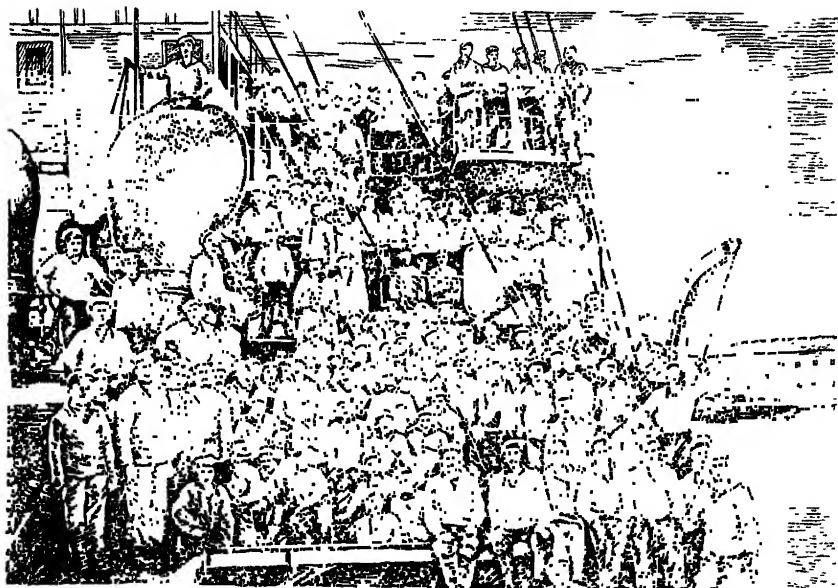
In the 1905 revolution the Bolsheviks fought for Lenin's program on the national question. Comrade Stalin formulated this program in the following terms: "Complete democracy in the country is the basis and condition for the solution of the national problem. . . . *The right of self-determination is an essential element in the solution of the national problem. . . . Regional autonomy, autonomy for such crystalized units as Poland, Lithuania, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, etc. . . . National equality in all forms (language, schools, etc.) is an essential element in the solution of the national question*" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, pp. 49-51).

## 10. THE DECEMBER ARMED INSURRECTION

**The Strike Develops into Insurrection.** Experience taught the workers that they could not achieve victory over tsarism by strikes alone; they realized that armed insurrection was necessary for this.

The first to take to arms after the October strike were the sailors and artillerymen of Kronstadt. For two days and nights—October 26 and 27—Kronstadt was in the hands of the insurgents. But the sailors' movement was unorganized, it was accompanied by the wrecking of shops and the living quarters of the officers, and it lacked a plan and clearly formulated aim. On October 28, the insurrection was crushed and 200 of the participants and leaders of the insurrection were court-martialed.

On November 1, 1905, the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies proclaimed a general political strike in support of the demand for rescinding martial law in Poland and for the release of the Kronstadt insurgents. The tsar's government was obliged to yield to the demands of the workers of St. Petersburg. Martial



The Crew of the Insurgent Cruiser *Ochakov*

law in Poland was rescinded, and instead of trying the Kronstadt sailors by court martial, which had power to pass sentence of death, they were tried by a military court and received comparatively light sentences: nine were sentenced to penal servitude, 123 to imprisonment, and 83 were even acquitted.

The November general strike of the St. Petersburg workers saved the lives of the insurgent Kronstadt sailors and was of enormous political importance, for it vividly demonstrated to the soldiers and sailors that the working class alone was their true champion and leader of their struggle. The Mensheviks had opposed this second general strike. Instead of fraternization with the soldiers and revolutionary propaganda in the tsar's army for the purpose of winning it to the side of the insurgent people they put forward the counter-revolutionary demand for the withdrawal of the garrison from St. Petersburg. Had this been done the soldiers would have been isolated from the St. Petersburg proletariat and left under the undivided influence of the army officers.

**The Naval Revolt in Sevastopol.** The Bolsheviks continued with their work of preparing for an armed insurrection in the Black Sea Fleet after the suppression of the revolt on the battleship *Potemkin*. The insurrection was started on November 14 by the crew



of the cruiser *Ochakov*. On November 15, 6,000 sailors on other ships and the workers employed in the fortress of Sevastopol joined the insurrection. The battleship *Potemkin*, renamed the *Panteleimon*, again hoisted the red flag. The Sevastopol revolt was led by Lieutenant Schmidt. Being a bourgeois democrat in his convictions he, instead of launching a vigorous attack against the tsar's forces, undertook no active operations whatever, but waited for the entire fleet to join the *Ochakov*. Naively believing that the tsar would make concessions, he even sent the latter a telegram demanding political liberties. In spite of his confused political views, however, Lieutenant Schmidt was devoted to the revolution. On November 15, he boarded the gunboat *Svirepy* and going from ship to ship he urged the men to join the insurrection. Many of them hoisted the red flag, but Lieutenant Schmidt was unable to organize them for joint and speedy operations.

The authorities recovered from their consternation and drew troops to Sevastopol. Late in the afternoon of November 15, the batteries and ships which had remained loyal to the government opened fire on the *Ochakov* and the other revolutionary ships and continued all night. The *Ochakov* caught fire. The crew tried to save themselves from the flames by swimming or rowing ashore, but they were shot down by machine guns that were posted on the beach. Schmidt and the other leaders of the insurrection were captured and later court-martialled and shot.

The insurrection in Sevastopol roused new forces for the struggle in the army and in the navy.

Commenting on the weaknesses of the revolts among the armed forces Lenin said that the soldiers and sailors "lacked a clear understanding of the fact that only the most vigorous continuation of the armed struggle, only a victory over all the military and civil authorities, only the overthrow of the government and the seizure of power over the whole state could guarantee the success of the revolution" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 10).

**The Peasant Revolts.** In November and December 1905, the struggle which the peasants waged against the landlords became increasingly intense. Peasant revolts broke out in 170 counties, more than a third of the total number of counties in European Russia. In November there were about 800 cases of peasants seizing landlords' estates. Of exceptional dimensions were the peasant revolts in the Saratov, Kursk and Tambov Gubernias and in the Ukraine—in the Kharkov and Chernigov Gubernias, where the peasants wrecked 272 landlords' country-seats. In Latvia the peasants organized several hundred revolutionary committees. In Guria the peasant "Red Hundreds" drove out all the tsar's officials and established revolutionary rule. The peasants' struggle and preparation for armed insurrection in Transcaucasia proceeded under the direct leadership of Comrade Stalin.

**Preparations for Armed Insurrection.** In November 1905 Lenin, compelled till then to live the life of an exile abroad, returned to Russia, took charge of the Party leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and set to work to prepare for an armed insurrection. While engaged in the colossal task of reorganizing the Party to meet the altered conditions, he at the same time edited *Novaya Zhizn*, the first legal Bolshevik newspaper, and wrote articles for it on the fundamental problems of the revolution and the tactics and organization of the Party.

On Lenin's instructions the Party organizations procured arms, formed workers' fighting squads and organized their military training. The Bolsheviks also conducted extensive revolutionary propaganda among the armed forces.

In December 1905, a Bolshevik Party Conference was held in Tammerfors, in Finland. Here Lenin and Stalin met for the first time. The conference discussed the question of armed insurrection. While the conference was in progress news was received of the outbreak of the insurrection in Moscow. On Lenin's proposal the conference broke up to allow the delegates to return to their respective localities in order to take the lead of the insurrection.

By the beginning of December the position of the tsarist autocracy had improved. By this time the more reliable regular army units had been transferred from Manchuria to European Russia. The foreign bankers hastened to the aid of tsarism, for they feared they would lose the capital they had invested in Russia and that a victory of the Russian revolution would kindle the flames of socialist revolution in Europe. They helped the tsar's government to meet the more urgent payments of interest on loans and promised another large loan for the suppression of the revolution.

The immense sweep of the revolution frightened the liberals who, therefore, began to support the autocracy in its struggle against the workers and peasants. The Mensheviks continued their treacherous tactics and frustrated the insurrection where preparations were being made for it, or where it had already commenced.

On December 2, the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies adopted the so-called financial manifesto in which it called upon the inhabitants to demand their savings bank deposits and wages in gold. Next day the government arrested the Soviet. The St. Petersburg proletariat was unable to answer this challenge of the autocracy by an insurrection, for the treacherous policy which had been pursued by the Menshevik and Trotskyite leadership of the Soviet had left them unprepared for such action.

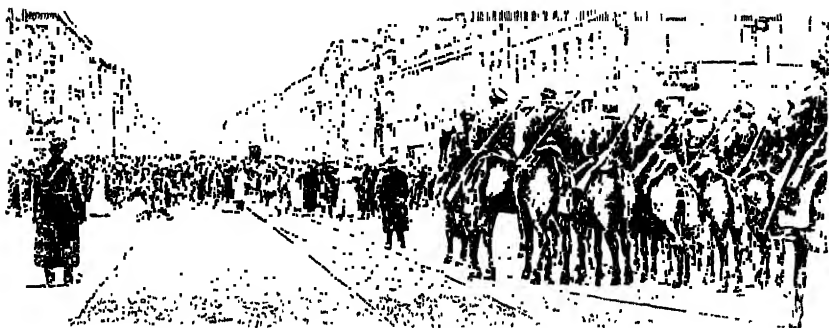
**The Armed Insurrection in Moscow.** The Moscow Soviet, which was led by Bolsheviks, began actively to prepare for an armed insurrection from the very first day of its existence. As a result of the

agitation conducted by the Bolsheviks, unrest broke out among the troops of the Moscow garrison. The first to revolt was the Rostov Regiment. On December 2, the men arrested their officers and elected a Soldiers' Committee to conduct the regiment's affairs. The other units of the Moscow garrison, however, failed to support the revolt and it was crushed by the evening of December 4.

On December 5 a conference of Moscow Bolsheviks resolved to urge the Moscow Soviet to proclaim a general strike with the view of developing it into an armed insurrection.

The general strike commenced in the morning of December 7. Owing to the shortage of firearms the workers in the factories forged cold-steel weapons. About 2,000 workers (almost half of them Bolsheviks) joined the fighting squads. Street demonstrations, meetings and collisions with the police occurred in the working-class districts. The Astrakhan Regiment came out in full fighting kit to assist the insurgents, but it was intercepted by the Cossacks, completely surrounded and compelled to return to barracks. The other regiments were also confined to barracks because they were "unreliable." The Moscow garrison wavered. Of the 15,000 men who constituted the garrison only 1,390 Dragoons were on the side of the autocracy; the Governor General of Moscow sent urgent messages to St. Petersburg pleading for the dispatch of other troops. The revolutionaries allowed the opportunity to slip by and the government succeeded in coping with the unrest in the Moscow garrison.

The men of the Nikolayevskaya Railway (now the October Railway) did not join the strike. As a consequence, the tsarist government was able to send the Semyonovsky Guards Regiment from St. Petersburg and artillery from Tver (now Kalinin) to suppress the insurrection in Moscow. The police arrested the leaders of the insurrection,



Troops Break Up a Workers' Demonstration in St. Petersburg  
in November 1905



Barricades in Losnaya Street, Moscow, December 1905

who had been appointed by the Moscow Committee of the Party, and dispersed a mass meeting that was being held in the Aquarium Park, by armed force.

In the evening of December 9, troops surrounded Fiedler's School, where the fighting squads were assembled, and bombarded it with artillery. The demolition of the school infuriated the masses. In response to the appeal of the fighting squads, and in many cases on their own accord, the people of Moscow erected barricades, using telegraph poles, sleighs, packing cases, barrels, wooden planks and so forth. That night Moscow was covered with barricades. On December 15, after the arrival of the troops from St. Petersburg, the barricades were bombarded by artillery; machine guns were posted on the belfries of the Moscow churches and monasteries. Unable to hold out against artillery and machine guns, the fighting squads retreated, but fought back, heroically defending every inch of ground, and concentrated in the Presnya District of Moscow (now called Krasnaya [Red] Presnya). The staff of the insurrection had its headquarters in a large textile mill known as the Trekhgornaya Mills, but the leading body of the insurrection—the Moscow Committee of the Party—had been arrested on the eve of the outbreak. Deprived of central leadership, the insurrection deteriorated into isolated district fighting. The workers waged a guerilla fight against the troops; they hesitated to fight their way to the centre of the city, and confined themselves to the defensive. This was the main reason for the weakness of the Moscow insurrection.

Nevertheless, Presnya held out against the tsar's troops armed

with artillery, machine guns and rifles, for ten whole days. The district was subjected to continuous bombardment. Houses burned and collapsed, but the workers remained staunch. Fighting squads from other industrial centres in the Moscow Region hastened to the aid of the Moscow revolutionaries. A workers' squad led by M. V. Frunze arrived from Ivanovo-Voznesensk. Peasants supplied bread to the fighters, who were aided by the entire population of the Presnya District. But the workers of the other towns, and of St. Petersburg in particular, proved unable to ensure the victory of the armed insurrection in Moscow.

Weighing up the situation, the Moscow Committee of the Party and the Moscow Soviet of Workers' Deputies resolved to stop the armed insurrection on the night of December 18. In obedience to this order the squads operating in the Presnya District stopped fighting. Although all the railways were now occupied by tsarist troops, an engine driver named Ukhtomsky offered to run a train carrying the fighters out of Moscow along the Kazanskaya Railway. The heroic railwayman, driving the train out of Moscow at terrific speed, through a hail of machine-gun and rifle fire, succeeded in saving the revolutionary fighters.

The tsar's troops dealt frightfully with the peaceful population, the workers and their families. Hundreds of them were shot without trial or investigation. Over a thousand workers perished in the course of the suppression of the insurrection. A punitive expedition on the Moscow-Kazanskaya Railway shot hundreds of workers according to a list which had been previously drawn up by the gendarmes. Engine driver Ukhtomsky was also shot. Years later, when Soviet rule was established, one of the stations on the Moscow-Kazanskaya Railway and the adjacent district of the Moscow Region were named after him.

**Insurrections in Other Towns.** The workers also rose to overthrow tsarist rule in a number of other towns; and so too did the oppressed nationalities in Russia. In the Ukraine, the insurgent railwaymen, miners and metal workers in the Donetz Basin captured the extremely important Ekaterininskaya (now Stalin) Railway. In Gorlovka, the centre of the insurrection, the tsarist authorities were overthrown and replaced by representatives of the workers. The insurgents were armed with home-made swords and daggers and a small number of revolvers. Although so poorly armed, 4,000 revolutionaries heroically fought a 5-hour battle with Cossacks, losing 300 men during the encounter. Battles with police and troops took place all over the Donetz Basin. In Lugansk, fighting squads were formed and the strike was led by K. E. Voroshilov. The gendarmes had arrested Voroshilov in the summer of 1905, but in December thousands of workers marched to the prison where he was confined

and released their "Red General," as the workers, already at that time, called him.

In Novorossiisk power was captured by the local Soviet of Workers' Deputies, which was led by Bolsheviks. The City Governor and authorities fled. People's courts were elected and were recognized by the whole population. The burden of taxation was placed entirely upon the propertied classes.

In Sochi, in the North Caucasus, the insurgent people captured the garrison and the tsarist administration; and in the rural districts of the Sochi Region power passed into the hands of the people. Soviets were set up in all centres. The people of Sochi were helped by "Red Hundreds" sent from Guria.

In Vladikavkaz, the Ossetinian cavalry unit rose in revolt in December 1905, and it was only with the aid of Cossacks that the revolt of this national-minority unit was suppressed.

In Guria, the insurgent people in many districts seized power and the landlords' land. Here the insurrection was led by the Caucasian Bolsheviks, headed by Comrade Stalin.

In Tiflis, the Mensheviks, by arrangement with the tsar's Viceroy, undertook to maintain "order" against the armed insurrection, and to enable them to carry out this police function the Viceroy provided them with 500 rifles and quantities of ammunition.

In Siberia—in Krasnoyarsk and Chita—troops joined the insurgent workers and, as a consequence, seats in the Soviets of these two cities were also occupied by Soldiers' Deputies. In Krasnoyarsk, the soldiers, jointly with the workers, barricaded themselves in one of the railway workshops, and fighting a regular battle, bravely repulsed the attacks of the troops which were sent to suppress the insurrection.

The insurrection on the Siberian Railway was brutally suppressed by two punitive expeditions. One expedition, under the command of General Möller-Zakomelsky, moved up from European Russia, while the other, under the command of General Rennenkampf, moved to meet the former from Harbin. Shootings without trial or investigation marked the trail of these punitive expeditions. One of those who were shot, by direct order of Möller-Zakomelsky, was the old Bolshevik and Lenin's pupil I. V. Babushkin, who was caught while transporting arms.

Ruthless operations by punitive expeditions were also conducted in Central Russia, in the Ukraine, in Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Transcaucasia and Siberia. "Make fewer arrests, shoot more," "Don't argue, shoot," such were the orders issued by those butchers, the tsar's ministers, and by the tsar himself. Thousands were executed and tens of thousands were arrested and sentenced to penal servitude or exile. The peasants were subjected to wholesale flogging.

The bourgeoisie welcomed the suppression of the insurrection. The Mensheviks censured the insurgent workers. Plekhanov wrote: "They should not have taken to arms." To this Lenin retorted: "On the contrary, we should have taken to arms more resolutely, energetically and aggressively; we should have explained to the masses that it was impossible to confine ourselves to a peaceful strike and that a fearless and relentless armed fight was indispensable" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1934, p. 348).

The December insurrection ended in defeat. The reasons for the defeat were the following: the peasants failed to support the insurrection in time. The major part of the army was on the side of tsarism. The insurrection was not sufficiently organized, and it broke out in different places at different times. The insurgents lacked sufficient arms. The insurgents pursued defensive and not offensive tactics. The Mensheviks and Trotsky, together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, sabotaged the insurrection and did everything they could to hinder it. In the Caucasus—in Tiflis—the Mensheviks openly helped the tsarist authorities to suppress the insurrection.

The December insurrection marked the peak of the revolution. After its defeat the revolutionary tide gradually subsided.

## 11. RETREAT OF THE REVOLUTION

**The Revolutionary Struggle in 1906.** After the defeat of the December insurrection the second period of the first Russian revolution commenced. The workers and the revolutionary peasants retreated slowly, fighting all the time. In 1906, fresh strata of workers entered the struggle. These were the workers employed in the unskilled trades in the industrial centres, and those in the less industrially-developed districts who had taken little part in the struggle in 1905. The number of workers involved in strikes in 1906 exceeded 1,000,000 and in 1907 it amounted to 740,000. In 1906 and 1907 the strike movement was weaker than in 1905, but it was on a much higher level than in the period before 1905.

The strike struggle waged by the agricultural labourers bore a revolutionary character; the labourers organized a boycott of the landlords. The peasant movement spread very widely and affected about three hundred counties, including many that had not been affected by the movement in 1905. In many cases the peasants drove the landlords from their estates.

In the spring of 1906 unrest became more frequent in the army as well, and even affected the tsar's guards.

Simultaneously with the peasant movement in 1906, the movement for national liberation assumed wider proportions in the Baltic Prov-

inces and in Transcaucasia. Here regular battles took place between the peasants and the tsar's forces.

**The Elections to the First State Duma.** While crushing the revolution by armed force, the autocracy also began, as Lenin put it, "to crush popular liberties by means of a monarchist 'constitution.'"

On December 11, 1905, during the armed insurrection, a law was promulgated governing the elections to the State Duma. This law was needed by the autocracy to deceive the people. It granted electoral rights mainly to the propertied classes—the landlords and the capitalists. As for the electoral rights received by the workers and peasants, they contained considerable restrictions. The suffrage was far from universal. Agricultural labourers, day labourers and many other categories of workers were not granted the vote at all, nor were women, the men in the armed forces, students or persons under the age of twenty-five. The suffrage was not equal. For urban electors a high property qualification was fixed, which meant that they had to be in receipt of large incomes from the renting of houses or from commercial or industrial enterprises. The voters were divided up into four curiae or voters' groups: landowning (landlords), urban (the bourgeoisie), peasants and workers. The rate of representation for the different curiae was not the same. The landowning group could elect one elector for every 2,000 voters, the urban group could elect one for every 7,000 voters, the peasants' group one for every 30,000 voters and the workers' group one for every 90,000 voters. The elections were not direct, but went through a series of intermediary stages. For the peasants there were actually four stages. First, the peasants in each village elected electors to a volost meeting which elected two delegates to a county meeting. The county meeting elected electors to a gubernia election meeting, which at last elected the deputies to the Duma. Voting was in fact not secret.

Witte calculated that with the aid of the peasants, who still retained some faith in the tsar, he would succeed in securing the election of a monarchist State Duma, and therefore, in the electoral law he drafted he allowed the peasant electors 40 per cent of the total number of seats. In February 1906, the government issued a supplementary regulation governing the elections to the State Duma, which still further restricted the electoral rights of the workers and urban democratic voters compared with the law of December 11.

The elections to the State Duma took place in March and April 1906, in an atmosphere of the most brutal police terrorism. The Bolsheviks adhered to the decision which was adopted by the united Central Committee of the Party to boycott the elections. Nevertheless, they spoke at election meetings and exposed the deception perpetrated by



the tsar and the treacherous role played by the liberals, and agitated for armed insurrection. The organized class-conscious workers took no part in the voting. The Mensheviks in the Caucasus violated the Party's boycott decision and secured the return of their leaders to the First State Duma. In Baku, however, the only large industrial centre in the Caucasus, the Bolsheviks effected the boycott of the election.

**The Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.** Working under the direct leadership of Lenin, the St. Petersburg Committee of the Party steadily gained influence among the workers. Even the Mensheviks were obliged to admit that the proletariat had followed not their lead but that of the Bolsheviks during the December insurrection. The split in the Party, however, was preventing the establishment of working-class unity. And so, when the demand arose among the workers for Party unity it received the support of the Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks, unable to resist the pressure of the masses of the workers, were also obliged to agree to unity. To this end, the Fourth Congress (known as the Unity Congress) of the R.S.D.L.P. was held in Stockholm in April 1906. At this congress the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks formally united, but maintained their independent organizational existence as two factions within the Party. The Bolshevik organizations had suffered severely from police raids and arrests after the December insurrection. The Mensheviks, on the other hand, had gained strength by accepting into their ranks numerous representatives of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia who had nothing in common with the proletariat. That was why the Mensheviks had a majority at this congress. When the congress discussed the agrarian question the Bolsheviks upheld Lenin's program for the confiscation of the landlords' estates and the nationalization of all the land. The Mensheviks, however, supported a program for the "municipalization of the land." This was aimed at a compromise with the remnants of serfdom and with tsarism, for it proposed that the land should be transferred to the existing Zemstvos, which were to rent it to the peasants.

Taking advantage of their chance majority, the Mensheviks secured the adoption of their agrarian program.

**The First State Duma.** Although the December insurrection was suppressed, the tsar's government was compelled to convene the State Duma. The autocracy, however, did all it could to restrict its powers. Thus, at the end of April 1906, three days before the Duma was to open, so-called "Fundamental State Laws," were published, in which it was affirmed that "supreme autocratic state power is vested in the Emperor of all the Russias." The tsar retained the right to amend the fundamental laws and to issue a number of exceptionally important laws without submitting them to the Duma. Furthermore, the State Council was given

equal powers with the Duma. The Council was reformed and made to consist half of high government officials appointed by the tsar and half of elected representatives of the nobility, the Zemstvos, the universities and the clergy. Bills passed by the Duma had to be passed by the State Council before they could be sent to the tsar. He, in his turn, had the final say as to whether to accept or reject them. Thus, the legislative rights of the Duma promised in the Manifesto of October 17, were almost nullified. Witte, with whose name the Manifesto of October 17 was associated, could not be used to carry out this avowedly reactionary policy and he was therefore dismissed. Goremykin, a representative of the reactionary bureaucracy, became President of the Council of Ministers.

Nevertheless, although the rights of the electors and the scope of activity of the State Duma were severely restricted, the Duma did to some extent limit the powers of the tsarist autocracy.

The composition of the Duma after the elections also proved to be unfavourable for the tsar's government. Of the 524 Deputies 204 were peasants, but these were not the sort of peasants Count Witte had counted on. The majority of the peasant Deputies formed what was called the Trudovik group, or Group of Toil, which, at first, the workers' Deputies also joined. The Social-Democratic group in the Duma numbered 18 Deputies. The largest single group in the First State Duma was that of the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets) who numbered 179 Deputies. In their hunt for peasant votes during the elections, the Cadets had described themselves as the "Party of Popular Freedom." The Rights (from the Black Hundreds to the Octobrists) had 44 Deputies.

As a result of the constitutional illusions spread among them by the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the peasants believed that they would be able to get land by peaceful means through the Duma and had therefore elected their Deputies with keen expectations. The Cadets proposed that only a part of the landlords' land be transferred to the peasants, and then only at a "fair assessment." The peasants know from their own experience that the "fair assessment" of the landlords was two or three times higher than the market price of the land, and as the attitude of the government and of the Cadets, as the leading party in the Duma, towards their urgent demands for land became clear, their constitutional illusions were dispelled. The awakening of the class-consciousness of the peasant Deputies was quickened by the unceasing propaganda of the Bolsheviks who, by their policy, enabled the workers' Deputies in the Duma to take a correct proletarian class stand on a number of questions.

Lenin and Stalin denounced the Cadets as enemies of the working peasantry and called upon the peasants to act in unison with the workers, to form and strengthen a proletarian and peasant alliance, for, they

urged, only such an alliance could bring the peasants victory in their struggle for land. As a result of the propaganda conducted by the Social-Democrats, the Trudovik group introduced a land bill in the Duma providing for the compulsory alienation of all landlord land; it proposed the nationalization of all the land, including peasant allotments. The impassioned speeches delivered by the peasant Deputies during the discussion of the agrarian question in the Duma reverberated throughout the country and had a rousing effect upon the peasantry. In the period from May to August 1906, peasant unrest spread to 50 per cent of all the counties in the country. The growth of revolutionary activity among the peasants greatly alarmed the tsarist government. It issued an official statement to the peasants in which it declared that while it would never agree to the compulsory alienation of the landlords' land, it was willing to buy at state expense plots of land voluntarily sold by landowners and resell these plots to the peasants at a price within their means. In answer to this declaration of war upon the peasantry the Trudovik group tried to get carried through the Duma an appeal to the people, but this was defeated by the Cadets. The government was scared by the turn which the discussion of the land question had taken and decided to disperse the Duma. On July 8, 1906, it proclaimed the dissolution of the Duma on the grounds that the peasants "in a number of gubernias had taken the path of open plunder, the seizure of other people's property and disobedience to the law and the lawful authorities." After the dispersion of the First State Duma the Minister of the Interior Stolypin was appointed President of the Council of Ministers in place of Goremykin, who was considered incapable of waging a determined struggle against the revolution. Lenin summed up Stolypin's political biography in the following brief terms: "A landlord and a marshal of the nobility, he was appointed governor in 1902, under Plehve, gained 'fame' in the eyes of the tsar and the reactionary court clique by his brutal reprisals against the peasants and the cruel punishment he meted out to them (in the Saratov Province), organized Black Hundred gangs and pogroms in 1905 (the pogrom in Balashov), became Minister of the Interior in 1906 and President of the Council of Ministers after the dispersal of the First State Duma" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. I, Moscow, 1946, p. 486).

The situation in the country remained revolutionary. In the summer of 1906 large-scale revolts of soldiers and sailors broke out in Sveaborg and Kronstadt. The Bolshevik military organization made extensive preparations for an insurrection among the naval and military forces stationed in Finland, but the insurrection in Sveaborg and Kronstadt broke out prematurely, before these preparations were completed. Warships and artillery were sent against the insurgent sailors and the insurrections were crushed. The insurgents were court-martialled and executed.

To punish the revolutionaries, Stolypin, in August 1906, instituted field courts-martial, which up to April 1907, sentenced over a thousand men to death. Execution on the gallows became a common practice.

In an endeavour to split the ranks of the peasantry who had been united in their struggle for land during the revolution, Stolypin, on November 9, 1906, in the period between the First and the Second Dumas, issued a decree granting the peasants the right to leave the peasant communities and to acquire definite ownership of their allotments.

Owing to the intensification of the peasants' struggle for land, the tsar's government again entered into negotiations with the governments of Germany and Austria for their intervention in Russian affairs.

On July 7 (20), 1906, on the very eve of the dispersion of the First State Duma, the Bolshevik newspaper *Echo* published an article by Lenin entitled "The Plots of the Reaction and the Threats of the Pogrom-mongers" in which he exposed the machinations of the tsar and of his German and Austrian friends. After quoting the rapture the government newspaper *Rossiia* had expressed over the forthcoming intervention, Lenin went on to say: "These measures consist in preparing the armed forces of Germany and Austria for the invasion of Russia if the cause of freedom is victorious or on the point of victory. The Berlin government is already in communication with the Austrian government on this question. Both governments have admitted that 'under certain circumstances active intervention in the internal affairs of Russia with the object of suppressing or restricting this [i.e., revolutionary] movement may become desirable and useful. . . .'"

"Thus, there can be no doubt about the plot that is being hatched by international counter-revolution. The Russian government is calling in the aid of foreign troops against the Russian people. Negotiations for this have been and are being conducted, and have already resulted in a fairly definite agreement" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. IX, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 411).

This article helped still further to expose the counter-revolutionary designs of tsarism.

**The Second State Duma.** The experience of the First Duma showed that the Duma could be used as a platform from which to expose the crimes of tsarism and the treachery of the liberals, and also to fight for the leadership of the peasants. Consequently, on Lenin's proposal, the Bolsheviks decided to take part in the elections to the Second State Duma. The result of the participation of the Left-wing parties in the elections was that the Second Duma was more radical than the First. The Cadets won only about half the seats they had held in the First Duma (98 as against 179). The Trudovik group, together with the Socialist-Revo-

lutionaries, had 157 seats, compared with 94 in the First Duma. The Social-Democrats won 65 seats compared with 18 in the First Duma. But although the Second Duma was more radical than the First, it was weaker than the latter. The revolutionary tide was subsiding. The Bolsheviks, however, set themselves the task of utilizing the Duma to expose tsarism and the treacherous liberals. The activities of the Bolshevik Deputies in the Duma were directed by Lenin, and he formulated the main points of their speeches on the most important questions. The Mensheviks, however, wanted to engage in peaceful legislative work in alliance with the liberals, under the government of Stolypin, the hangman.

At the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. which was held in London in April and May 1907, the Bolsheviks strongly denounced the treacherous tactics which the Mensheviks pursued in the Second State Duma. At this congress the Bolsheviks were in the majority, and the congress adopted the Bolshevik resolution calling for the systematic exposure of the counter-revolutionary tactics of the liberals.

The election to the Second State Duma had shown that the existing electoral law, even though it did greatly restrict the franchise for the working people, could not ensure the election of a Duma that would satisfy the tsarist autocracy. Consequently, the government made preparations to dissolve the Second Duma and to amend the electoral law with the object of still further restricting the franchise for the workers and peasants. To provide an excuse for dispersing the Duma, the tsar's government resorted to outright provocation, accusing the Social-Democratic group in the Second State Duma of hatching a "plot against the state." The charge was a deliberately false one, and had been fabricated by the secret police. On June 1, 1907, Stolypin demanded the impeachment of the Social-Democratic Deputies. The Cadets were already willing to yield to the government's demand, but on June 3, 1907, the government dissolved the Duma and promulgated a new electoral law that was calculated to ensure a majority in the next Duma for a bloc of the landlords and the big bourgeoisie. Since then that day has been known as the *coup d'état* of June 3, for the tsar's government had violated its own Manifesto of October 17, 1905, according to which no laws could be passed without the consent of the Duma. The Social-Democratic Deputies in the Second Duma were arrested and tried by a tsarist court and sentenced to penal servitude and exile.

Reasons for the Defeat of the Revolution of 1905. The *coup d'état* of June 3, 1907, signified the temporary defeat of the revolution.

Already at that time the Bolsheviks attributed the defeat of the first Russian revolution to the fact that a firm alliance between the workers and peasants had not yet been formed. As Lenin wrote: "This

alliance was spontaneous, not formulated, and often unconscious" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 15). The peasants did not yet sufficiently understand that the tsar and the landlords constituted a single gang of the bitterest enemies of the people, and that in order to overthrow the landlords it was necessary to overthrow the tsar too. Nor did they yet realize that the only faithful ally and leader they had was the working class. As a consequence, a large section of the peasantry failed to support the armed struggle of the workers against tsarism. Even those peasants who fought against the landlords and tsarism lacked sufficient political consciousness and organization.

The army, which consisted mainly of peasants and reflected the inadequate class consciousness of the peasantry, had not yet gone over to the side of the insurgents, and the bulk of it helped tsarism to crush the revolution.

Nor were the workers sufficiently united in their activities. The strike wave reached its peak in 1905, but the intensity of the strike movement varied according to districts. While in industrial regions like St. Petersburg, Baku, Riga and other places, every worker went on strike no less than four or five times in 1905, in the districts of the Moscow Gubernia every worker went on strike only once in the year, and in a number of industrially less-developed gubernias, some workers had not struck at all. In 1906, the number of strikers dropped in the more-industrialized gubernias, whereas in the least-industrialized gubernias, the backwoods, as Lenin called them, the number of strikers rose. But by that time the vanguard of the working class had already been weakened.

In the period of 1905 to 1907, the working class still lacked the unity necessary for the victory of the revolution. At first the Party was split into two factions; later it united, but only formally. The Bolsheviks pursued a consistent revolutionary policy, but the Mensheviks still exercised influence among a certain section of the workers and retarded the development of the revolution.

Thus, in the first Russian revolution its three main forces: workers, peasants and soldiers, had not yet merged in one common torrent.

The tsar's government received the assistance of the foreign imperialists, who were apprehensive about the fate of their investments in Russia and feared that the revolution would spread to Western Europe.

In the spring of 1906, the French bankers granted the tsar loans amounting to a billion francs. Wilhelm II mustered a whole army to invade Russia in support of the tsarist autocracy. An important factor that helped tsarism was the conclusion of peace with Japan, which strengthened the position of the tsar's government. Moreover, to suppress the revolution the tsar could use the military forces that were released from Manchuria.

**The Significance of the Revolution of 1905-1907.** The heroic struggle which the workers and peasants waged in the revolution of 1905-1907 dealt a heavy blow at tsarism, it sapped its foundations and compelled it to make concessions. All its attempts to restore the conditions that had existed in Russia before the revolution proved futile. It could not recover from the blows which the revolution inflicted upon it.

For the workers and peasants of Russia, the revolution of 1905-1907 served as a great schooling in political struggle. It roused millions of working people to political life and revealed to them the relations of all classes to each other. The masses acquired enormous experience in employing the general strike and armed insurrection, and this they utilized in their subsequent struggles. The working class created the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, the embryonic form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This experience helped the workers and peasants to achieve victory twelve years later, in October-November 1917. Hence, the revolution of 1905 was the dress rehearsal of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The international significance of the revolution of 1905 was also very great. The first Russian revolution took place thirty-five years after the suppression of the Paris Commune. It took place in the epoch of imperialism. As Comrade Stalin wrote: "Thus, the revolution against tsarism verged on and had to pass into a revolution against imperialism, into a proletarian revolution" (*J. Stalin, Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 17). A direct result of the Russian revolution was the development of the political struggle in Austria in October 1905, in Germany in January 1906, in France in May 1906, and in Asia (the revolutions in Persia, Turkey and China).

Millions of workers and peasants all over the world have been and are being taught by the experience of the first Russian revolution of 1905.

### *Chapter III*

## **THE STOLYPIN REACTION (1908-1912)**

### **12. THE THIRD OF JUNE MONARCHY**

**The Industrial Depression of 1904-1908.** By the time of the defeat of the first Russian revolution the capitalist world was entering into another economic crisis (1907-1909), which followed on the heels of the temporary industrial revival of 1903-1907.

In tsarist Russia the crisis of the early 1900's lasted much longer than the ordinary periodical crises in Europe, and in 1904 it was followed by a depression.

The unsuccessful war against Japan, the falling off in government contracts and railway construction, and a series of crop failures which caused the already restricted home market to shrink still further, had all served to prolong the industrial crisis of the early 1900's. The new world economic crisis aggravated the industrial depression in Russia.

The course of the crisis may be illustrated by the output of pig iron in that period. Taking the output of pig iron in 1900 at 100, the index number of the output in 1903 was 84. As a consequence of the increased demand created by the war against Japan the index number rose in 1904 to 102, but in 1905-1906 it dropped again, to 93, and in the period of depression from 1907 to 1909 it did not rise above 97. Only in 1910, after a ten years' state of crisis, did the output exceed that of the beginning of the century.

All the basic industries, including the oil industry, were in a state of stagnation. The coal industry of the Donetz Basin alone was somewhat less affected by the crisis and the depression. The textile industry, the output of which had risen somewhat by 1907, remained stagnant during the period of the depression.

After the revolution of 1905, important changes took place in industry. The concentration of industry increased. Capitalist combines—trusts and syndicates—grew rapidly. During the period of the industrial depression the big banks became more powerful and took a direct part in the reorganization of industry, strengthening and enlarging some plants, closing down others, and combining and reorganizing still others. For the purpose of financing Russian industry the French bankers promoted the formation of a banking syndicate known as the Russo-French Finance Company. Capitalism in Russia became increasingly monopolistic, imperialist capitalism.

In many cases the factory owners closed down their plants for a time in order to install new machinery, to reorganize the management and to combine with other plants. The unemployment that was created by the crisis assumed a spasmodic character, and this gave rise to a feeling of insecurity among the workers. Male workers were dismissed wholesale and replaced by cheap female and child labour. The material conditions of the workers sharply deteriorated. The employers tried to force the workers back to the conditions of labour that had existed before the revolution of 1905. The working day was lengthened to ten and even to twelve hours. Piece rates for all categories of work were reduced, and fines again became the rule. The cost of living steadily rose.

The large federations of employers that sprang up in 1906 and 1907 in St. Petersburg and Moscow formed a united front with tsarism against the workers. The employers' organizations discharged the more class-conscious and militant workers. These workers were blacklisted and could not find employment anywhere. The factory owners often practised wholesale dismissals of workers.



**Counter-Revolution Rampant.** After three years of revolution, Russia passed through years of bloodshed and rampant counter-revolution. Lenin described this period as years "of the black Duma, rampant violence and oppression, the onslaught of the capitalists upon the workers, the loss of the gains which the workers had won" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 391). The tsarist government, the landlords and the capitalists wreaked vengeance upon the workers and peasants for the revolution.

In Siberia, in the Caucasus and in the Baltic Provinces, punitive expeditions continued their atrocities, setting fire to and destroying scores of villages, killing thousands of workers and peasants without trial, and flogging women and children. For a long time the tsarist government feared to return to their regular stations the troops which had been sent to suppress the revolution. The troops in the central gubernias were reinforced with troops drawn from the frontier regions, as the tsarist autocracy believed that the "internal enemy" was more dangerous than the foreign foe.

The field courts-martial that operated in 1906 and 1907 were replaced by military courts. The entire country was dotted with gallows, which the people dubbed "Stolypin neckties," after the head of the tsar's government, Stolypin. Lenin wrote regarding this period: "There has never before been in Russia such rampant persecution by tsarism, and during these five years the gallows beat the record of three centuries of Russian history." Hundreds of thousands of people were flung into prison, and there the revolutionaries were subjected to torture and brutal ill-treatment. For having participated in strikes or revolutionary demonstrations workers were sentenced to long years of penal servitude.

After the *coup d'état* of June 3, the Black Hundreds, who were organized by the League of the Russian People, intensified their pogrom activities. Black Hundred outrages were particularly rife in Odessa, where organized gangs of hooligans marched through the town carrying rubber truncheons and revolvers and beating up passers-by. Not a year passed but what the Black Hundred hooligans organized a bloody pogrom against the Jews. Throughout the country predatory raids by the police and gendarmes upon the workers' organizations became more frequent. In 1907, 159 trade unions were suppressed, in 1908, over 100 were suppressed, in 1909, 96 were suppressed. Workers' newspapers and magazines were banned. The workers' cultural and educational organizations that managed to survive dragged out a miserable existence.

Tsarism acted as the bitterest enemy of the people. In a general description he gave of the 3rd of June monarchy, Lenin wrote: "... The tsarist monarchy is the rallying centre of that gang of Black Hundred landlords (first among whom is Romanov) which has turned Russia into

the terror not only of Europe, but now also of Asia, the gang which has developed tyranny, robbery and embezzlement of state funds by government officials, systematic violence against the 'common people,' torment and torture of political opponents, etc., to absolutely exceptional dimensions" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 247).

**The Third State Duma.** The *coup d'état* of the 3rd of June marked the opening of the offensive which tsarism launched against the gains won by the revolutionary masses; but it could not return entirely to the conditions that prevailed before the revolution. Although the revolution of 1905 sustained defeat, the revolutionary struggle which the working people had waged made it impossible for tsarism to rule by means of the old methods. After dispersing two Dumas, Nicholas II was obliged to convene the Third Duma. Another reason which dictated the necessity of maintaining the semblance of a representative institution in Russia was the growth of capitalism, the growing strength of the Russian bourgeoisie, and the unstable international position of tsarism, which was compelled to manoeuvre and give Europe the impression that Russia was a constitutional country. Above all, however, tsarism aimed at making the Third Duma a new class bulwark for itself by forming a bloc with the counter-revolutionary Russian bourgeoisie.

In the endeavour to "retain power and revenues" for the ruling class of feudal landlords, tsarism—following the 1905 revolution—took the second step (the first was taken in 1861) towards establishing a bourgeois monarchy, by consolidating the bloc with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. The political expression and embodiment of the 3rd of June bloc between the landlords and the bourgeoisie was the Third State Duma, convened on the basis of the new electoral law of June 3, 1907.

In conformity with this law, the landlords were allowed to elect one elector from every 230 voters, the bourgeoisie one from every thousand, the peasants one from every 60,000, and the workers only one from every 125,000. This law increased the number of landlord electors almost fivefold, that of bourgeois electors sevenfold, compared with that provided for by the law of December 11, 1905, while the number of the worker and peasant electors was more than halved. The franchise for the non-Russian nationalities in Russia was still further restricted. The peoples of Central Asia were totally deprived of representation in the Duma. Poland was entitled to send only 12 Deputies instead of 35, and of these, two—the representatives of Warsaw and the Kholm Region—had to be Russians. European Russia was granted 403 seats in the Duma, but the "border regions" were given only 39.

Thus, the new electoral law ensured that the Third State Duma

would consist of landlords and the bourgeoisie. In other words, it was not so much an elected body as a body carefully chosen to suit the interests of tsarism. Of the members of the Third Duma, 202, or 46 per cent of the total, were landlords.

The state of the parties represented in the Duma also clearly proved that it was a bourgeois and landlord body. The Right-wing parties had 40 per cent of the seats, the Octobrists 25 per cent, the Constitutional-Democrats (Cadets) 23 per cent and the Left-wing parties a little over 7 per cent. The rest of the Deputies declared themselves to be non-party. No single party had an absolute majority in the Duma.

This latter fact enabled the tsarist government to manoeuvre and to base itself on the Black Hundred and Octobrist majority at one moment and on the Octobrist and Cadet majority at another, without having to fear serious opposition from either of them. The obedient Octobrists voted for all the government proposals either in alliance with the Right-wing Black Hundreds or in alliance with the Cadets.

The head of the government during the 3rd of June bloc was Stolypin, one of the most prominent representatives of the landed nobility, who were organized in the counter-revolutionary organization known as the Council of the United Nobility. With the support of the Octobrists and Constitutional-Democrats, Stolypin launched an offensive against the workers and peasants and the working people in the non-Russian national regions. The keynote of Stolypin's domestic policy was: "First pacification and then reforms." Stolypin achieved "pacification" by means of the cruelest terrorism. Fearing another outburst of revolution, however, he was obliged to introduce an agrarian reform.

### 13. STOLYPIN'S AGRARIAN REFORM

**The State of Agriculture.** The agrarian, or land question, was, as Lenin expressed it, the pivot of the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution. The problem was to break up the vast landlord latifundia which were the basis of the mediaeval bondage in which the peasants still found themselves and the major obstacle to the development of capitalism. After the revolution of 1905, 30,000 big landlords still owned 70,000,000 desyatins of land, while an almost equal amount belonged to 10,500,000 poor peasant households. The distribution of the land in this fashion kept agriculture in a state of extreme backwardness.

The landlords found it more profitable to rent land to the peasants than to farm their land themselves on modern lines. The peasants cultivated their own allotments and the land which they rented from the landlords with their primitive implements. As a result, the general

level of agriculture in Russia in the beginning of the twentieth century was as low as ever it was before. As far as yield is concerned, Russia stood almost at the bottom of the list of all the countries of the world. In the period from 1909 to 1913 the average yield of grain in Russia was 45 poods per desyatin compared with 90 in France, 152 in Germany and 192 in Denmark. In respect to the mechanization of agriculture, Russia was equally far behind the advanced countries. The greater part of the peasants' lands were ploughed with wooden ploughs, and grain was sown and threshed by hand. In 1910, there were employed in agriculture throughout the empire 3,000,000 primitive wooden ploughs, 7,000,000 wooden-handled ploughs, 5,000,000 wooden harrows and only 27,000 steam threshers. Tractors and electric ploughs were not even thought of.

After the revolution of 1905, the utter destruction of the old mediaeval system of landownership in Russia became particularly urgent. Still more acute than in 1861 became the struggle for one or the other of the two possible paths of development of capitalism in agriculture—the Prussian or the American. In 1907, Lenin wrote that there were two possibilities: "Either the Prussian type of evolution: the feudal landlord will become a Junker. The power of the landlords in the state will be consolidated for decades. Monarchy. 'A military despotism clothed in parliamentary forms' instead of democracy. The utmost inequality among the rural and among the rest of the population. Or the American type of evolution. Abolition of the landlord system. The peasant becomes a free farmer. Sovereignty of the people. A bourgeois-democratic system. The utmost equality among the rural population as the starting point and condition for free capitalism" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XI, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 188).

The peasant revolts in the period of the revolution showed that the peasantry refused to tolerate their present conditions any longer, wanted to sweep away the old system of landownership by revolutionary means, and were in fact taking the American path of development of capitalism in agriculture.

The tsarist government, the landlords and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie wanted to bring about this change in a way that would serve the interests of the landlords, they wanted the Prussian way. The government therefore decided to split the peasantry, even at the cost of ruining the countryside, and to encourage the rise of a prosperous class of small landowners—"new landlords" who would fight for the protection of private property in land and for the preservation of the tsarist autocracy.

The government, therefore, abandoned its former policy of preserving the village communities and the mediaeval forms of land tenure connected with it, such as tying the peasants to the village community, collective responsibility of the community for the payment of taxes,

etc. The aim of the autocracy in destroying the village communities was to strengthen the position of the kulaks and to transform the bulk of the peasants into a vast reserve army of labour, thereby ensuring cheap labour power for large-scale industry and for the landlords' estates.

While the "reform" ("emancipation of the serfs") of 1861 enabled the landlords to rob the peasants of their land, the new reform provided the kulaks with the opportunity to do so.

**Destruction of the Village Community.** Stolypin devised three groups of measures with which he hoped to avert an agrarian revolution and strengthen the rule of tsarism. These groups were: 1) destruction of the village community, 2) introduction of "khutor" and "otrub" farms in the countryside, and 3) resettlement of the peasants in other regions.

Stolypin's ukase of November 9, 1906, which initiated the destruction of the village community, became, after it was amended by the Third State Duma, the law of June 14, 1910, which was to complete this destruction. The ukase of November 9, 1906, granted the peasants permission to leave the village community if they so desired; the law of June 14, 1910, made it obligatory for them to do so. In those village communities where there had been no redivision of the land since the time when the peasants were allotted land, the plots became the private property of householders. Where the land had been redistributed, householders were allowed to run their allotments as separate farms.

The Stolypin land law destroyed the community system of land tenure. It allowed the peasant to leave the village community and to sell his allotment, which he had no right to do before. This enabled the rich peasants, or kulaks, to buy up the allotments of the ruined poor peasants at low prices. A peasant who broke with the village community could remain in the village and become permanent owner of his plots, which could be exchanged for one continuous plot, the "otrub." Or he could transfer his home and his property to a plot of land outside the village, and set up a farm there, a "khutor." In either case the setting up of a farm entailed expenditure. The government granted loans to kulaks to purchase land and organize "khutor" farms. It demanded that the best of the village community's land be allotted to the kulak "khutor"-farmers. The establishment of "khutor" and "otrub" farms was frequently effected by force, with the help of the rural prefects. The tsarist government sent a whole army of mounted police to the rural districts and gave Provincial Governors power to send troops to suppress the peasants who resisted land assignment from community land. However, among "khutor"-farmers the kulaks were in a minority. There was a majority of another category of "khutor"-farmers,

the ruined and impoverished peasants who, having no means to escape from want, said: "There's nowhere to go, so let's take up a 'khutor' farm." But having no means with which to make such farms work, they would sell their allotments to the kulaks. In this way the kulak farms within and without the villages grew into real estates where wage labour was employed on a large scale. The process of differentiation of the peasantry into classes was accelerated. A section of the peasants who had been deprived of their land went to seek a livelihood in the towns and became proletarians.

During the ten years the Stolypin law was in operation over 2,000,000 householders, with an area of land amounting to 18,000,000 hectares, left the village communities and took over the land as their private property. Of this number, 54.7 per cent set up "khutor" and "otrub" farms, but three-fifths of these subsequently sold their allotments.

The buying and selling of land was transacted through the Peasant Bank. From 1906 to 1910 the peasants acquired through this bank a total of 6,000,000 hectares of land. The bank concerned itself exclusively with the setting up of "khutor" and "otrub" farms, and during the ten years it was in operation, from 1906 to 1916, it helped to form 200,000 of these. The Peasant Bank operated in the interests of the nobility and the kulaks. It purchased allotment land at a ridiculously low price compared with that of landlord land. Where landlord land was assessed at 121 rubles per hectare, allotment land was assessed at 79 rubles, but the bank sold the latter at 140 to 150 rubles per hectare. When it sold land to be paid for in instalments it demanded high interest on the mortgage. Frequently peasants who had become "khutor"-farmers fell into arrears in the payment of interest and principal on loans received from the bank. In such cases their property was sold under the hammer and they were compelled to seek a livelihood in the towns.

Stolypin also extensively applied the policy of resettlement. His aim was to form a class of "sturdy" and "prosperous" peasant owners in the Central regions of Russia and to shift the discontented poor and middle peasants further out—to Siberia and other border regions. From 1906 to 1910, 2,500,000 peasants were resettled in Siberia, the Far East, Central Asia and other outlying regions.

In the pursuit of political aims the Stolypin government rode roughshod over the interests of the settlers and the rights of the native inhabitants.

The task of carrying out the resettlement policy was entrusted to resettlement commissions, Prefects and Provincial Governors. The commissions packed off whole contingents of poor and middle peasants in cattle trucks which bore the inscription: "Forty persons, eight horses." The settlers with their wives and children, healthy and sick, travelled for months to their new places of settlement, living in these cattle trucks, in which they cooked their food and did their washing;

and when they reached their destination they were bundled out and left in the open field, in the rain or snow. To create some shelter for themselves they hastily dug dugouts, and then began a veritable martyrdom in their quest for land and loans with which to start their farms. Most of the land that was allotted them was situated in remote and inconvenient places, where there was no water, meadows and no pastures. The loans that were granted were inadequate. What the settlers suffered, left to their fate in these remote districts, can be seen from the following excerpt from the report of Prince Lvov, whom the Zemstvos sent on a mission of inspection to the Far East. "Isolation from the world, living as if on an uninhabited island among the marshes in the dense taiga, in the marshy valleys and muddy hills, absolutely wild conditions of life, labour and sustenance, naturally crush the weak-spirited and poor settler. He becomes apathetic after exhausting his small stock of energy at the very beginning of his struggle against stern nature in building his wretched habitation. Scurvy and typhus attack his exhausted frame and carry him to the graveyard. In many settlements, in 1907, the death rate was positively incredible, amounting to 25 and 30 per cent. In the settlements there are as many gravestones as there are households, and many of the settlements will have to be shifted to new sections otherwise they will be transformed into graveyards."

Many of the settlers abandoned their newly acquired allotments in despair and returned to their former places of habitation utterly ruined. Settlers who but recently had been middle peasants were reduced either to working as agricultural labourers or going into the towns to seek work.

This settlement policy spread ruin among the native inhabitants of the border regions. The land intended for colonization was forcibly taken from the natives. The Kirghiz, for example, were driven wholesale from their winter pastures. The Caucasian highlanders were pushed from their fertile lands into the rocky gorges. In Central Asia, magnificent orchards, that were situated in an area intended for cultivation by settlers, were simply destroyed.

The ruined and impoverished native inhabitants of the border regions became revolutionary and augmented the ranks of the fighters against tsarism.

**The Result of Stolypin's Agrarian Reform.** When he introduced his agrarian reform Stolypin stated that his object was to wrest the peasantry out of the hands of revolution and to convert the kulaks into a class of "small landlords" which was to serve as a firm bulwark for the autocracy in its struggle against the revolution.

"Give me twenty quiet years and I will reform Russia," he said.

In an article entitled "The Last Safety Valve," Lenin showed that Stolypin's agrarian policy brought neither "reform" nor "quiet."

In 1910, an outbreak of cholera in the south of Russia carried away 100,000 persons. Plague broke out in the steppes of Astrakhan. Ruination, poverty and starvation roused the anger of the peasants and imbued them with the spirit of revolution.

Another crop failure in 1911, and the famine which affected 30,000,000 peasants showed that the Stolypin reform had not abolished the fundamental causes of the backwardness of agriculture. Typhus and other epidemic diseases ravaged the famine-affected areas.

Stolypin's reform did not abolish mediaeval landownership. The royal family, the landlords and the monasteries still retained over 150,000,000 hectares of the best and most fertile land in the country. The landlords continued to keep the peasants in bondage, compelling them to cultivate their, the landlords', land with their wretched horses and primitive implements. "This is not capitalism," wrote Lenin, describing the state of landlord and peasant farming that resulted from Stolypin's reform. "This is not the European method of farming. . . . This is the *old Chinese way*. This is the *Turkish way*. This is the *feudal way*" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, Moscow, 1934, p. 239).

The reform did not even abolish the open-field system and other survivals of serfdom which reduced the productivity of the peasants' labour. The peasants, with bitter irony, described Stolypin's policy of land settlement as "land unsettlement."

Stolypin's reform merely postponed the doom of serfdom; it did not eliminate the profound contradictions that constituted the basis of the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution. It still further accelerated the process of differentiation among the peasantry and intensified the class struggle in the rural districts. The agrarian question, the fundamental question of the Russian revolution, could be settled only by abolishing the landlord latifundia and by transferring the 70,000,000 hectares of landlord land to the peasants without compensation. But only another revolution could do this.

#### 14. THE DECLINE OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT AND IDEOLOGICAL CONFUSION IN THE PERIOD OF REACTION

**The Working-Class Movement in the Period of Reaction.** In the winter of 1907, the Stolypin government issued an order for the arrest of Lenin. The tsarist sleuths hunted high and low for the leader of the revolution. On the proposal of the Party, Lenin, who was living in Finland at the time, went abroad. To board the ship unobserved by the police he, one night, crossed the ice in the Gulf of Finland on foot to a near-by island, accompanied by two Finnish peasants. The December ice was frail and Lenin was almost drowned in an icehole, out of which he managed to extricate himself with difficulty. He got safe



on board at last and left Finland for Switzerland. His second period abroad as an exile lasted nearly ten years.

While abroad, in February 1908, Lenin resumed the publication of the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary*, in the columns of which he began to prepare the Party and the working class for another revolution.

In 1907, Comrade Stalin left Tiflis for Baku, where he led the revolutionary struggle of the Baku proletariat.

Under the blows of reaction the strike movement in Russia continued to subside. In 1908, 176,000 workers were involved in strikes, in 1909, the number was 64,000, and in 1910, it was only 46,000. The strikes were of a defensive character. Only in Baku did the working-class movement, led by Comrade Stalin, bear a clearly expressed political character. To divert the workers from the revolutionary struggle, the oil employers invited the workers in the oil plants and oil fields to elect delegates to a conference with employers to discuss the terms of a collective agreement. The Bolsheviks called upon the workers to boycott this conference.

At the end of 1907, when reaction was raging throughout the country, a sort of workers' parliament was in session for nearly two weeks in Baku, at which the workers drew up their demands to be presented to the oil employers. When these demands were rejected the Bolsheviks called for a general strike. During the preparations for this strike the twenty-two-year-old Azerbaijan worker Hanlar, a splendid orator and leader of the masses, was foully assassinated. Hanlar's funeral developed into a powerful political demonstration. Speaking at the graveside of the fallen fighter, Comrade Stalin called upon the Azerbaijan workers to continue the struggle. Hanlar, he said, was the first sacrifice the Azerbaijan people had made for the Russian revolution.

Commenting on the militant character of the Baku strikes, Lenin wrote: "In 1908, at the head of the list of gubernias showing a large number of strikes stands Baku with 47,000 strikers. The last of the Mohicans of the mass political strike!" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 33.)

In March 1908, Comrade Stalin was arrested by the gendarmes, but even in prison he continued to lead the movement and sent out articles for publication in the newspaper *Gudok*. One day a group of Bolsheviks was sent off from the prison to penal servitude. From his prison window Comrade Stalin called out to them as they went: "Keep your manacles, we shall want them for the tsar's government!"

In the autumn of 1908, Comrade Stalin was sentenced to two years' exile in Solvychegodsk, but in the summer of 1909, he escaped from there.

**Ideological Confusion among the Intellectuals.** Describing the political life of Russia during the period of the Stolypin reaction, Comrade Stalin called it "an abomination of desolation." "Fettered public

opinion," he went on to say, "general weariness and apathy, want and despair among the workers, a downtrodden and intimidated peasantry and with the police-landlord-capitalist hounds running riot—such are the characteristic features of Stolypin's 'pacification.'" ("On the Occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of *Pravda*," Stalin's article published in *Pravda* No. 98 of May 5, 1922.)

The defeat of the revolution caused disintegration and degeneration among the intellectuals. Some of the bourgeois fellow-travellers of the revolution deserted to the camp of its open enemies. Others found jobs for themselves in the legal working-class organizations, condemned all revolutionary activity, and called upon the workers to adjust themselves to reaction and reconcile themselves to tsarism. This section of the intellectuals believed that Stolypin's reforms had already converted Russia into a bourgeois state and had made revolution superfluous. More hostile to the revolution than any other section of the intellectuals was the bourgeois (Cadet) intelligentsia who united around the symposium entitled *Vekhi* (*Landmarks*) which was published in 1909. The contributors to this symposium were prominent representatives of the bourgeois intelligentsia, former legal Marxists and Constitutional-Democrats. They proclaimed war on Marxism, renounced the struggle for democracy and called for conciliation with tsarism. *Vekhi* advocated the doctrines of the Orthodox Russian Church, mysticism and obedience to God and the powers that be, and championed the Great-Power and imperialist foreign policy which the Cadet bourgeoisie began to advocate after 1905.

Ideological confusion and collapse were particularly rife among the petty-bourgeois parties (Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and others) in which numerous factions, groups and coteries were formed.

The Mensheviks were of the opinion that the revolution was over and that Stolypin had put Russia onto the path of bourgeois development. They tried to adjust themselves to the Stolypin regime and urged that the old militant Social-Democratic Party, which tsarism had driven underground, should be liquidated. For this reason the Mensheviks were called Liquidators. Lenin called the Liquidators the "Stolypin Labour Party" because they had become the servants and coadjutors of the 3rd of June monarchy.

The Socialist-Revolutionary Party split in two. The Right Socialist-Revolutionaries had as early as 1906 formed a semi-Cadet Working People's Socialist Party and were referred to briefly as Popular Socialists. The Popular Socialists advocated the payment of compensation for landlords' land alienated for the benefit of the peasantry and entered into a bloc with the Cadets. The "Left" wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party formed a semi-anarchist group known as the Maximalist Socialist-Revolutionaries. They proposed economic and political

terrorism as the principal weapon in the struggle and soon deteriorated into an unprincipled group of expropriators.

During the period of reaction and police terrorism treachery and provocation became widespread. Agents provocateurs wormed their way into the Party organizations and some of them, on the instructions of the secret police, engaged in political murder which brought scores of innocent people to the gallows. A sensational event of that period was the exposure of the agent provocateur Azef who, since 1903, had been at the head of the "militant organization" of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. The Azef affair vividly demonstrated that the terroristic tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries were useful to the secret police and harmful to the masses.

## 15. THE BOLSHEVIKS DURING THE PERIOD OF REACTION

**The Bolsheviks' Fight to Preserve the Party.** The Bolsheviks alone were able to retreat in perfect order. They were aware that the victory achieved by tsarism was a temporary and unstable one and continued to rally the forces for another revolution. They were fiercely persecuted by the tsarist government and were liable to be sentenced to penal servitude if caught by the police; but they went underground and tirelessly continued their revolutionary activities. They formed Bolshevik cells in factories and, combining legal with illegal forms of activity, they made use of every legal possibility, such as trade unions, workers' clubs, adult Sunday schools and co-operative societies, for the purpose of maintaining contact with the masses. The Bolshevik Deputies in the State Duma utilized the tribune of the Duma to further the interests of the revolution. The aim of the Bolsheviks was still, as in 1905, to overthrow tsarism and to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution in order to pass on to the socialist revolution. They continued to advocate the old and tried slogans: A democratic republic, confiscation of the landlords' estates, and an 8-hour day.

Amidst the stern conditions of the Stolypin reaction the Bolsheviks waged a struggle on two fronts—against the Menshevik Liquidators and against the Otzovists. The latter term was applied to a section of former Bolsheviks who demanded the recall (in Russian—*otzvat*) of the workers' Deputies from the State Duma and the cessation of all work in legal organizations. Lenin called the Otzovists "Liquidators inside-out," because their tactics would have resulted in the Party becoming isolated from the masses and, consequently, in the liquidation of the revolutionary Party. For this reason the Otzovists were expelled from the Bolshevik organization.

Trotsky and the Trotskyites took a Liquidatorist stand on all questions. Lenin said that Trotsky was more despicable and harmful than the

avowed Liquidators because he deceived the workers by asserting that he was "above factions," whereas actually he supported the Menshevik Liquidators. It was in that period that Lenin called Trotsky "Judas Trotsky." In 1912 Trotsky organized the so-called "August bloc," which consisted of all the anti-Party elements which were united in their struggle against Bolshevism.

Trotsky was supported in his opposition to Lenin by Kamenev, Zinoviev and Rykov. Concealing their alliance with Trotsky, they succeeded in getting the Bolshevik newspaper *Proletary* closed down and in securing support for Trotsky's newspaper. Kamenev joined the editorial board of Trotsky's newspaper and tried to turn it into the organ of the Central Committee of the Party.

Despondency and lack of faith infected a section of the intellectuals who regarded themselves as Marxists but who had never taken a firm Marxian stand. They launched a "criticism" of the theoretical principles of Marxism. Some of the intellectuals who had deserted Marxism even began to urge the necessity of creating a new religion (the so-called "God-seekers" and "God-builders").

In his famous book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which appeared in 1909, Lenin trounced these degenerates in the sphere of Marxist theory and fully substantiated the basic theoretical principles of the Marxist party.

**The Bolsheviks Form an Independent Marxist Party.** The fight against the Liquidators, Otzovists and Trotskyites confronted the Bolsheviks with the task of uniting all the Bolsheviks and forming them into an independent Marxist party. This was necessary in order to be able to prepare the working class for a new upward swing of the revolution.

For the purpose of forming the independent Bolshevik Party the Sixth All-Russian Party Conference was held in Prague, in January 1912. This conference was equal in importance to a Party congress. The Prague Conference elected a Bolshevik Central Committee of the Party, headed by Lenin. J. V. Stalin and Y. M. Sverdlov, who were in exile in Siberia at the time, were elected to the Central Committee in their absence.

The Bolshevik Party did not adopt a new name after defeating the Mensheviks both ideologically and organizationally, and after expelling them and the Otzovists from the Party; it retained the old name of Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party but added the word "Bolsheviks" in brackets. This name it retained up to 1918.

In its decisions the Prague Conference pointed to the inevitability of another revolutionary upsurge and urged the necessity of intensifying activities among the masses. For the purpose of directing the Party's revolutionary activities in Russia, a centre for practical work was set up known as the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee. This Bureau was headed by Comrade Stalin. On Lenin's instruc-

tions, Sergo Orjonikidze travelled to the place where Comrade Stalin was in exile in order to inform him of the conference's decisions and to arrange for his escape. In February 1912, Comrade Stalin escaped from exile for the fourth time. He visited a number of cities in Russia and headed the growing revolutionary movement in St. Petersburg.

**The Bolshevik Iron Guard.** Under the guidance of Lenin and Stalin many of the Bolsheviks who were active underground during the stern period of reaction developed into outstanding professional revolutionaries and Party leaders.

One of these was the indomitable revolutionary Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov, whom Lenin described as "the most finished type of professional revolutionary." Sverdlov commenced his underground revolutionary activities at the early age of fifteen among the workers of Nizhni Novgorod and Sormovo. In 1902, after organizing a political demonstration in Sormovo, he was arrested and imprisoned for the first time; after that the whole of his life consisted of strenuous revolutionary activity, ever dogged by danger, and frequently interrupted by arrests, exile and escape from exile. In 1905 he engaged in Bolshevik activities in Kazan and in the Urals where he became the beloved leader of the masses of the workers. For two years after the defeat of the revolution he was incarcerated in a fortress. His sentence expired during the period of reaction and soon after his release he was arrested again and exiled to the district of Maximkin Yar, in the Naryn Region. Five times he tried to escape from this remote place where even the mails were received only twice a year. In the autumn of 1912, he tried to cross the river Yenisei in a canoe and was nearly drowned. At the end of 1912, he reached St. Petersburg.

Another staunch Bolshevik fighter was Mikhail Vassilyevich Frunze. In 1905, he led the strike of the Ivanovo-Voznesensk workers. In March 1907, he was arrested and put in prison to await trial on a charge that made him liable to sentence of death. At the trial his counsel said to him: "Renounce your proletarians and you will be pardoned forthwith." Frunze indignantly told the court that he refused to have a lawyer like that to defend him. The tsarist court sentenced him to ten years' penal servitude.

In this period extensive Party work was also conducted by Sergei Mironovich Kirov. Kirov joined the Bolshevik Party in Tomsk when still a youth of eighteen and took a most active part in the revolution of 1905. He was arrested three times. On the third occasion he was arrested on the charge of conducting revolutionary activities and of organizing a secret printing plant. He was tried and sentenced to confinement in a fortress. Immediately he was released from prison he flung himself with his customary energy into Party work in Vladikavkas, where he organized and trained new cadres of revolutionary Bolsheviks.

A no less ardent and outstanding young revolutionary of that time was the pupil of Lenin and Stalin—Grigori Konstantinovich Orjonikidze, whose Party pseudonym was Sergo. The son of a Georgian peasant, he commenced revolutionary activity at the age of seventeen. In 1903 he joined the Bolshevik Party. During the first Russian revolution he took part in preparing the armed insurrection but was arrested in December 1905 while unloading a consignment of arms which had been received. He succeeded in escaping abroad but subsequently returned to Baku. In 1909, he made his way into Persia and took part in the Persian revolution. After repeated arrests Sergo Orjonikidze went to Lenin in Paris, where he attended a Party school organized by Lenin. At the Prague Conference he was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and he returned to Russia to conduct underground Bolshevik activity. He was arrested shortly after this, however, and sentenced to three years' confinement in the Schlüsselburg Fortress.

In this period too, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov became a professional revolutionary. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1906 while still a high-school student, and at the age of sixteen already conducted Marxist propaganda among the student youth. This activity he continued during the period of reaction. At the age of nineteen, not having yet graduated from high school, he was deported to Vologda Gubernia, but he continued his revolutionary activities even while in exile and combated the views of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Like the other Bolsheviks, V. M. Molotov spent his time in exile improving his knowledge of revolutionary theory and in studying the classical works of Marxism. In Vologda he established contact with and conducted revolutionary propaganda among the railway workers. When his period of exile expired he returned to St. Petersburg to conduct underground Bolshevik activity and took an active part in all the important measures undertaken by the St. Petersburg Bolshevik organization.

During the period of reaction the workingmen Bolsheviks Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin and Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov worked as professional underground revolutionaries.

M. I. Kalinin, a metal turner by trade, had led the arduous life of a professional revolutionary since the 1890's and had known the inside of many prisons in tsarist Russia. He had been a member of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class and one of the active agents of *Iskra*. In 1910, after completing a prison sentence, he went to work at an ordnance works in St. Petersburg, and in 1911, he became the leader of the Bolshevik organization in the Vyborg District of that city. At the Prague Conference he was elected as an alternate member of the Bolshevik Central Committee of the Party.

Equally arduous was the life of K. E. Voroshilov, who was a fitter in Lugansk. He started work in the factory at the age of fifteen and by the end of the 1890's he was already an active participant in illegal meetings and workers' demonstrations. In 1903, he joined the Bolshevik Party. During the 1905 revolution he prepared the workers of Lugansk for insurrection, formed fighting squads, procured arms, and taught the workers to handle firearms. At a meeting he addressed in 1905, he urged the workers to learn the art of armed fighting and to train their own commanders. One of the workers at the meeting called out: "We appoint you our Red General." "You are going too far," answered Voroshilov laughing. "I don't know anything about military matters." None of the workers, nor Voroshilov himself, then suspected that the "Red General" whom the workers appointed in 1905 would become a Marshal of the most powerful army in the world and a foremost expert in military matters.

Voroshilov was arrested after the revolution of 1905, and in 1907 he was exiled for three years. Three months later he escaped to Baku and together with Comrade Stalin took part in the struggle that was waged by the Baku workers. He was again arrested and deported to the Archangel Gubernia, but he escaped again and with great difficulty succeeded in reaching his native Donetz Basin in 1912.

Self-sacrificing and heroic work under the severest conditions of tsarist reaction was also conducted by other leaders of the Bolshevik underground in preparing the working class for another revolutionary upsurge.

## 16. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE STOLYPIN GOVERNMENT

**The Anglo-Russian Agreement.** The defeat of tsarism in the Russo-Japanese War led to a further decline of its international prestige and importance. After it had concluded the Portsmouth Peace Treaty with Japan, the autocracy wanted to muster its forces for the purpose of crushing the revolution, but it could do that only on two conditions: that it received a huge foreign loan, and that it secured itself against foreign attack. At first, Nicholas II placed his hopes upon an alliance with Germany which Wilhelm II was urging him to conclude. This plan, however, was frustrated by a group of Cabinet Ministers headed by Witte. Witte was aware that if Russia concluded an alliance with Germany, financial assistance from France would cease, the Franco-Russian alliance would be broken, and Russia would become completely dependent upon Germany in Europe and upon Japan in the Far East. As a consequence of his opposition, the secret treaty which Nicholas II and Wilhelm II had signed in Björke was annulled.

In 1906, Great Britain and France granted the tsarist autocracy loans amounting to 2,500,000,000 francs and thereby saved it from financial bankruptcy. These countries also helped the autocracy finally to settle its relations with Japan, which, on the pretext of implementing certain clauses of the Portsmouth Treaty, continued to present Russia with unacceptable demands and threatened to resume the war. After the recent losses, however, and after the demobilization of the Russian army in the Far East, tsarist Russia was totally incapable of waging another war with Japan. The British and French governments took advantage of Japan's need of a foreign loan to compel her to make concessions to Russia and to conclude, in the summer of 1907, an agreement guaranteeing the security of Russia's Far Eastern frontiers. The tsarist government, in its turn, pledged itself to support France in her struggle against Germany over Morocco, and agreed to a demarcation of spheres of influence between Great Britain and Russia in the Middle East (Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet). Thus, simultaneously with the signing of the Russo-Japanese agreement, a political agreement between Russia and Great Britain was signed. By the treaty of 1907, Northern Persia, the most densely populated part of the country, was recognized as Russia's sphere of influence, and Southern Persia, the strategical cover of the approaches to India, with its naval ports and rich oil deposits, was proclaimed Great Britain's sphere of influence. Central Persia was proclaimed a neutral zone.

The Anglo-Russian agreement supplemented the Franco-Russian Treaty of 1893 and the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 and thus consummated the formation of the Triple Entente between Great Britain, France and Russia. Herein lay its immense political importance. This Triple Entente was directed against the Triple Alliance that was headed by Germany.

**The Bosnia Crisis.** The definite formation of these two coalitions brought the prospect of a European war very much nearer.

From the very outset Russian tsarism occupied a subordinate position in the Entente. Russia's national interests called for the strengthening of her influence in the Balkans and in the Near East to counter-balance the growing Austro-German menace. But Russia was hindered by the international treaties which prohibited Russian warships from passing through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Russia failed to receive the diplomatic support of her allies, who preferred to leave the question unsettled in order to keep Russia dependent upon them.

In May and June 1908, a meeting between the King of England and the Tsar of Russia took place in Revel at which the two monarchs agreed to make joint preparations for war against Germany. They also agreed on the joint introduction of reforms in Macedonia, which, in



fact, meant preparing to wrest that region from Turkey. As regards the question of the Straits, however, the meeting in Revel failed to produce the results the Russian government desired.

First and foremost in accelerating the outbreak of the European war were Germany, who was better armed than any other country, and her satellite Austria-Hungary. The latter, a multi-national state, was suffering from internal disintegration and hoped to strengthen her position by pushing into the Balkan Peninsula.

In the autumn of 1908, a meeting took place between the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministers at which it was agreed that the tsarist government would raise no objection to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, who had occupied those regions since the Berlin Congress of 1878. In return for this, Austria-Hungary promised to support the Russian government's demand for the free passage of Russian warships through the Turkish Straits.

Tsarism's claims in the Balkans, however, were strongly opposed by Great Britain. Completely ignoring her promise to Russia, Austria-Hungary hastened to proclaim the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were inhabited by Serbs. This caused an outburst of patriotic indignation in Serbia. Tsarist Russia, which regarded herself as Serbia's protectress, demanded that the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the question of the Straits be discussed at a conference of the European Powers, but in March 1909 Germany intervened in the conflict and in terms that sounded like an ultimatum demanded that Russia and Serbia should officially recognize the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian crisis of 1908-1909 almost led to an armed conflict between the Powers; but tsarism was not prepared for another war and therefore gave way itself and compelled Serbia to do the same. The Rights in the Third Duma described this defeat sustained by tsarist diplomacy as a "diplomatic Tsushima."

**Tsarism's Policy in the Orient.** The tsarist government also lost its independence in pursuing its policy in relation to the countries of the Orient. In Persia, Turkey and China, Russian tsarism played the reactionary role of suppressor of movements for national liberation and of revolutions.

The Russian revolution of 1905-1907, the first bourgeois-democratic revolution in the epoch of imperialism, had wide repercussions among the colonial and semi-colonial peoples which were oppressed by imperialism, primarily among the Oriental peoples who lived in propinquity to Russia. In 1906, the bourgeois revolution in Persia began. Yielding to the demand of the people, the Shah of Persia instituted a parliament (the Mejlis); but Russian tsarism, whom the western imperialists allowed "freedom of action" in Persia, decided to crush the Persian revolution.

In the summer of 1908, Colonel Lyakhov, who was in command of a Cossack brigade in Persia, bombarded the Mejlis with artillery and established a reign of White terror in Teheran. The tsarist government compelled the Shah to dissolve the Mejlis; many members of the Mejlis were executed and others were flung into prison. But the Persian revolution continued in spite of this, and in 1909, the Shah was obliged to flee to Russia, leaving a boy successor. Great Britain and Russia instituted a financial blockade of revolutionary Persia. In December 1911, the Persian reactionaries, supported by Great Britain and Russia, carried out a counter-revolutionary *coup*. The Persian revolution was crushed. By agreement with Great Britain, Russia retained her troops of occupation in Northern Persia.

In 1908, a military *coup*, led by the party known as the Young Turks, was brought about in Turkey with the object of saving the integrity of the Turkish empire. This *coup* resulted in the introduction of a constitutional form of government. The first blow at the Young Turk revolution was struck by Austria-Hungary, which annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tsarist government too helped to strangle the Young Turk revolution by the Balkan policy it pursued. In 1909 it consented to Italy's annexation of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, Turkey's provinces in Africa. It also supported the claims of France and Great Britain to Arab territory. Under the leadership of Russia, a league of Balkan countries was formed to attack Turkey. All this served to weaken the Young Turk revolution and to turn the Young Turks towards rapprochement with German imperialism.

The biggest revolution in the Orient was the Chinese revolution of 1911, which was directed against the feudal rulers of China and against the foreign imperialists.

Russian tsarism also acted as the suppressor of the Chinese revolution by entering the bloc of six Powers (Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Japan and the United States), which subjected revolutionary China to a financial boycott and helped the counter-revolutionary President Yuan Shih-kai to suppress the revolution.

**Tsarism, the Reserve of Western Imperialism.** Although Russian tsarism pursued its own imperialist aims in the world war that was in preparation, the subordinate and dependent place it occupied in the Triple Entente converted it into the military reserve of Western imperialism.

The operations of the tsar's army in the impending war were determined by the military interests of Great Britain and France. At a conference of Chiefs of General Staffs held in 1911, the representative of France said: "The object which the Russian forces must pursue is to compel Germany to maintain the largest possible forces on the Eastern Front." The Russian Army was to launch an offensive against Germany simultaneously with the Anglo-French offensive.

At a conference of Chiefs of General Staffs held in 1912, France demanded that; in conformity with the Franco-Russian military convention of 1892, Russia should concentrate no less than 800,000 men on the Austro-German frontier, and that she should launch an attack on the sixteenth day of mobilization irrespective of what the situation on the Anglo-French front might be. To transport troops to the German frontier, tsarist Russia was to build new strategical railways, and it was stipulated that the next loan to be granted the tsarist government was to be used exclusively for this purpose.

All this indicated that tsarism was gradually losing its independence even in purely military matters.

Emphasizing Russia's dependence upon the West-European imperialists, Comrade Stalin wrote: "Tsarist Russia was an immense reserve of Western imperialism, not only in that it gave free entry to foreign capital, which controlled such basic branches of Russia's national economy as the fuel and metal industries, but also in that it could supply the Western imperialists with millions of soldiers" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 17).

## 17. THE GROWTH OF NATIONAL AND COLONIAL OPPRESSION DURING THE PERIOD OF THE STOLYPIN REACTION

**Tsarism's National Policy in the Period of Reaction.** The law of June 3, 1907, drastically reduced the franchise of a number of non-Russian nationalities and the Third State Duma passed a series of laws which still further restricted their elementary rights. The Stolypin government decided first of all to restrict the rights of those "border regions" where the movement for national liberation was strongest at that time—Finland, Poland and the Caucasus. •

In 1910, the Third State Duma, on the proposal of Stolypin, passed a law which provided that all fundamental questions affecting Finland should be discussed in the Duma, and that the measures passed in connection with them should receive the sanction of the tsar's government. Thus, the Finnish Sejm was converted into a mere advisory body on matters of legislation.

The Polish bourgeois nationalist parties in the Third State Duma had formed a separate Polish bloc, but this bloc offered only passive resistance to a bill introduced in the Duma for the institution in the western gubernias of Zemstvos, in which the Russian landlords were to be predominant.

Tsarism was able to rob Finland and Poland of the liberties they had won thanks to the heroic struggle waged by the Russian proletariat in 1905 because of the treachery of the Finnish and Polish bourgeoisie, whose hatred of the revolution united them with tsarism. As Lenin

wrote: "The experience of the 1905 revolution showed that even in these two nations the ruling classes, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, are renouncing the revolutionary struggle for freedom and are seeking rapprochement with the ruling classes in Russia and with the tsarist monarchy out of fear of the revolutionary proletariat of Finland and Poland" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 508).

The Third State Duma also discussed a bill providing for the extension to the Caucasus of the regulation of 1881, by which all peasants working under temporary obligation were released from serf labour with payment of compensation to the landlords.

Thus, serfdom in the Caucasus was abolished only in 1912; survivals of it continued right up to the revolution of 1917.

In the period of reaction the tsarist autocracy dropped its former policy of protecting the Moslem clergy who cultivated ignorance and fanaticism in their schools. The Rights in the Third State Duma demanded that all Moslem schools be closed in order to "Russify all the non-Russians, and to bring all the unorthodox into the Orthodox fold." The tsarist officials and the Orthodox Church intensified their persecution of Moslems, and Moslem schools and charitable institutions were banned.

The Black Hundreds in the Duma also succeeded in depriving the Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Jews of the right to have schools conducted in their own languages. In the Ukraine all the "Prosvity" were closed, and concerts and theatrical performances in the Ukrainian language were prohibited. High-school teachers and college professors suspected of having a "Ukrainian trend of thought" were dismissed. Minstrels were even prohibited from singing Ukrainian folk songs at fairs. Exceptionally fierce, however, was the Stolypin government's persecution of the Jews. It deliberately fomented anti-Semitism among the backward sections of the population. Six million Jews were herded in the "Pale," or ghettos, and yet the Black Hundreds in the Third Duma let loose a campaign about "the impermissibility of giving equal rights to the Jews" and demanded still further restrictions for the Jewish population in Russia. The pogrom-mongers among the higher tsarist officials staged the anti-Jewish trial known as the Beilis case. This case was framed up in the following way. In 1911, a gang of thieves in Kiev killed a Russian boy. The tsarist officials pounced upon this murder as a pretext for increasing the persecution of the Jews. The Public Prosecutor, supported by official experts who had been bribed for the purpose, charged a Jew named Beilis with the murder, alleging that he had committed the crime for "religious ends." This trial, which took place in 1913, roused a storm of protest among the entire progressive population of Russia and in all other countries. The jury acquitted Beilis.

Explaining why tsarism resorted to pogroms against the Jews and to the savage persecution of Jews, Lenin wrote: "The monarchy had to defend itself against the revolution; and the semi-Asiatic, feudal *Russian* monarchy of the Romanovs could not defend itself by any other but the most infamous, most disgusting, vile and cruel means. The only honourable way of combating the pogroms, the only rational way from the standpoint of a socialist and a democrat, is not to express high moral condemnation, but to assist the revolution selflessly and in every way, organize the revolution for the *overthrowal* of this monarchy" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. I, Moscow, 1946, p. 488).

## *Chapter IV*

# YEARS OF REVOLUTIONARY ADVANCE (1912-1914)

## 18. THE NEW UPSWING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

**Growth of Monopolistic Capitalism in Russia.** In 1910 the prolonged depression in Russia began to give way to an industrial boom. This was brought about by the considerable accumulation of home capital in the country and the growth of the home market due, partly, to the operation of Stolypin's agrarian reform. The kulak upper stratum of the peasantry which had established itself after the reform was introduced created an increased demand for iron goods, building materials, leather, textiles, sugar, etc. In 1909, a series of relatively good harvests began. Peasants' savings-bank deposits increased and from 1900 to 1914 rose by over a billion rubles.

The growth of the war industries, and of shipbuilding in particular, ensured the heavy industry of big government contracts. From 1905 to 1913, the government placed army contracts to the amount of 2,500,000,000 rubles; in two years of the boom period over 3,500 kilometres of railway were laid and a corresponding amount of rolling stock was built. Such were the main reasons for the industrial boom in Russia. The boom was also facilitated by the general economic revival in the western capitalist countries, due largely to the race for armaments and increase in war contracts.

During the period of the boom the monopolist organizations—trusts and syndicates—continued to grow and gain strength. The predominant form of monopolist organization in Russia was the syndicate. During the decade from 1900 to 1910, these syndicates gained control of the major part of the mining and metallurgical industry in Russia. The Prodamet, which combined from twelve to fifteen

of the largest metallurgical plants in the country, controlled two-thirds of the sales of the entire metallurgical industry. The Prodogol, the abbreviated name of the Russian Company for Trading in the Mineral Fuel of the Donetz Basin, which was formed in 1906, gained control of about 60 per cent of the coal output of the Donetz Basin. The Prodarud Syndicate, which was formed in 1908, controlled four-fifths of the ore output of the south of Russia. The growth of syndicates in light industry was slower and feebler. In 1908 the syndicate known as the Cotton Manufacturers' Company (in Moscow) controlled 47 cotton mills. The organization of syndicates was accompanied by a rise in the prices of the goods manufactured by the industries they controlled.

The banks increasingly became the owners of the manufacturing enterprises. The small and medium banks merged and formed powerful banking combines. In 1908, for example, the St. Petersburg-Azov, the Orel, and the South Russian Banks combined to form the United Bank. In 1910, the Northern Bank merged with the Russo-Chinese and Russo-Asiatic Banks. More than half the total bank capital in Russia was controlled by seven big banks.

The concentration of industry and the banks was accompanied by the rapid fusion of bank capital with industrial capital. The banks financed joint-stock companies and helped them to reorganize. This had been exceptionally marked during the crisis. The biggest industrial and financial magnates were simultaneously chairmen of bank directorates and directors of syndicates. Thus, Putilov, the owner of numerous metallurgical plants, was chairman of the Board of the big Russo-Azov Bank and also director of the Prodamet, to which his plants were affiliated. In the textile industry enormous influence was exercised by the finance capital magnates Ryabushinsky, Prokhorov, Morozov and others.

In this period too finance capital rapidly merged with the state apparatus. The financial magnates felt quite at home in the Ministries of Finance, Industry and Trade, while prominent government officials, and even members of the royal family, held shares in banks and in industrial undertakings. Many retired ministers left their ministerial armchairs to take up positions as directors of the banks and joint-stock companies of which they were shareholders.

The influence of foreign capital in the Russian banks and industry increased after the revolution of 1905-1907. By 1914, out of a total capital amounting to 435,500,000 rubles belonging to eighteen of the chief joint-stock banks, 185,500,000 rubles, or 42.6 per cent, was foreign capital, divided as follows: German capital 17 per cent, French capital 21.9 per cent, and British capital 3 per cent. Thus, British and French capital together constituted the largest share. Foreign capital gained control of Russian industry by forming joint-stock companies through

Russian and sometimes directly through foreign banks. Foreign capital gained control of nearly the whole of the Russian fuel industry and of the whole of the metallurgical industry.

**The Economic Backwardness of Russian Industry.** Although large-scale capitalist industry made considerable progress in Russia during the period of the boom, it nevertheless lagged behind the industry of Western Europe. As regards output of pig iron, Russia occupied fifth place in the world; as regards the technique of production and, in particular, consumption per head of the population, she was almost at the bottom of the list. Describing the backwardness of Russia, Lenin wrote: "During the half century that has passed since the peasants were liberated, iron consumption in Russia has increased fivefold, but still Russia remains an incredibly, unprecedentedly backward country, poverty-stricken and half savage, equipped with modern implements of production to the extent of only one-fourth of that of England, one-fifth of Germany and one-tenth of America" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 543).

One of the indices of the technical and economic backwardness of tsarist Russia was the state of railway transport. The total length of railways in Russia in 1913 was about 65,000 kilometres. Of this, 43,500 kilometres belonged to the state and over 19,000 kilometres belonged to private companies. As regards density of railways, Russia was almost at the bottom of the list.

In 1910, the total industrial output in Russia was one-ninth of that of the United States, and the average wage of the Russian worker was one-fourth of that of the American worker.

Stolypin and the Minister of Finance Kokovtsev made it a practice to borrow from the Paris bankers and hospitably opened the door wide for foreign capital, for they hoped, with the aid of French and British gold, to save landlordism and the tsarist system in the country in which capitalism was rapidly developing. To pay the interest on these loans the tsarist government annually squeezed hundreds of millions of rubles out of the population. Before the First World War Russia's national debt amounted to 8,800,000,000 rubles. Tsarist Russia's chief creditor before the war was France.

In tsarist Russia a number of leading branches of industry, such as electrical engineering, turbine building, machine-tool building, heavy engineering, and the automobile and chemical industries, did not exist.

The oil industry was controlled by foreign capital, who stopped at nothing in exploiting the rich deposits of Russian oil, wastefully utilizing only "gushers" and eschewing deep boring, extensive exploration of new fields, etc.

**The Lena Shootings.** The industrial boom was accompanied by the growth of the Russian proletariat and of the working-class movement.

The general upswing of the revolutionary proletarian struggle was stimulated by the events that occurred in the remote gold fields in Siberia that belonged to the Lena Gold Fields Company. This company was formed in 1908. Three-fourths of the shares belonged to British capitalists and the rest belonged to big Russian capitalists and high tsarist officials. Among the shareholders were capitalists like Putilov, bank directors like Vyshnegradsky, and a number of high St. Petersburg dignitaries. The British and Russian shareholders in the Lena Gold Fields Company drew profits amounting to over 7,000,000 rubles per annum. The gold-field workers were cruelly exploited and, in addition, were totally bereft of rights.

The gold fields were situated in the remote taiga, 1,700 kilometres from the railway. It was possible to get away from the place only during the navigation season on the river Lena. The conditions of labour were fixed by harsh contracts, and although the workers had no right to leave their jobs before the expiration of the contract they could be discharged at any time. Wages were paid only on the expiration of the contract; the provisions issued to the men at the company stores on account of wages were of the worst quality. The working day was fixed by contract at 10 to 11½ hours, but it was often extended at the arbitrary will of the management. The workers were completely in the power of the management who, to keep the workers in hand, had at their command a police force paid by the company. The Lena Gold Fields Company behaved like a feudal ruler. Byelozarov, the manager of the Lena Gold Fields, was called the uncrowned king of the taiga. In 1912, the gold fields were, as Lenin described them, one of "those corners where it seems as though serfdom existed but yesterday."

The atrocious conditions of labour, the holding up of wages, the sale of bad-quality provisions at exorbitant prices and the violence and tyranny of the management and the police often gave rise to unrest in the gold fields.

At the end of February 1912, a strike broke out on one of the sections where the conditions of the workers were exceptionally hard. It would have paid the management to close the section, but that would have meant breaking the contract, which was due to expire only in September. The management therefore set out to provoke the workers to break the contract themselves. The immediate cause of the strike was the issue of bad horse meat. The workers downed tools in protest and sent delegates to the other fields to bring the men out there. On March 1, the strike spread to a number of other sections. A strike committee was set up with the object of making the strike general. Strike committees were also set up in all the fields, and stewards were appointed in the living quarters. The Central Strike Committee opened negotiations with the management. Tulchinsky, the Regional Engineer, received the deputation with great courtesy and persuaded the Menshevik delegates to



agree to call off the strike. The Bolshevik-minded members of the Strike Committee conducted propaganda among the masses against calling off the strike.

It was decided to settle the question by a secret ballot of the workers. In the morning of March 25, two sugar barrels were placed opposite each other in one of the fields, one bearing the inscription "Will go back to work" and the other the inscription "Will not go back to work." The workers filed between the barrels holding a pebble in one hand. As they passed they dipped their hands into both barrels and dropped the pebble into one barrel or the other. Soon the barrel bearing the inscription "Will not go back to work" was full to the brim. In the other barrel only seventeen pebbles were found.

On March 27, the strike became general and over 6,000 workers were involved. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik-minded workers the strike proceeded in a unanimous and organized manner; but notwithstanding the peaceful character of the strike the management called for troops, and a large force was sent to the gold fields. For the deliberate purpose of creating disorders Captain of Gendarmes Treshchenkov ordered the arrest of the members of the Strike Committee and told the troops not to hesitate to "use force" against the workers if they attempted to release their comrades. On April 4 (17), 3,000 workers signed a statement to the effect that they had gone on strike on their own accord and had not been instigated to do so by anybody, and they marched in procession to the Nadezhdinsk Section of the gold fields to hand this statement to the local prosecuting attorney.

On this frosty morning of April 4, long lines of workers streamed from various parts of the gold fields to Nadezhdinsk, and on nearing that centre they linked up in one long, dark ribbon stretching for three or four kilometres. The road along which the procession wended its way was flanked on the one side by the steep bank of the river Bodaibo and on the other by stacks of timber. Near Nadezhdinsk the road was blocked by a cordon of troops in full fighting kit. Engineer Tulchinsky stepped out to the workers and told them to disperse. The workers at the head of the procession halted, but the rest, stretched out along the narrow road, continued to press forward. Suddenly shots rang out, volley after volley; 250 workers were killed and 270 were wounded.

This new atrocity committed by the tsarist autocracy roused a unanimous outburst of anger among the workers. A wave of protest strikes swept the country. Revolutionary demonstrations took place in the cities. On the demand of the Social-Democratic Deputies the State Duma was compelled to discuss the Lena events, but Makarov, the Minister of the Interior, explained the matter to the Duma in his own way. He said: "So it was, and so it will be."

This insolent statement of the tsar's minister was answered by



Victims of the Shooting in the Lena Gold Fields. From a painting in the Museum of the Revolution, Moscow

the rise of an immense mass political movement of the working class in protest against the Lena shootings. As Lenin wrote: "The Lena shootings . . . were an exact reflection of the *entire* regime of the Third-of-June monarchy." He went on to say that it was not the demand for certain particular rights but the general lack of rights that prompted the workers to enter into decisive struggle against tsarism. "It is precisely this general tyranny in Russian life," he wrote, "it is precisely the hopelessness and impossibility of waging a struggle for particular *rights*, precisely this incorrigibility of the tsar's monarchy and of its entire regime, that stood out so clearly against the background of the Lena events that they *fired* the masses with *revolutionary ardour*" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. I, Moscow, 1946, p. 550).

Emphasizing the historical significance of the Lena events, Comrade Stalin wrote in the Bolshevik newspaper *Zvezda* in 1912:

"The Lena shooting has broken the ice of silence and the river of the people's movement has begun to flow.

"The ice is broken! . . .

"All that was evil and pernicious in the present regime, all the ills of much-suffering Russia, were focussed in the one fact, the events on the Lena.

"That is why it was the Lena shootings that served as a signal for strikes and demonstrations."

**The Mass Revolutionary Movement During the Revival.** The wave of political strikes called in protest against the shooting down of the workers in the Lena gold fields swept over the whole country with extraordinary rapidity. Hundreds of thousands of workers downed tools. In St. Petersburg the strikes were accompanied by street demonstrations. The struggle of the St. Petersburg workers was led by Comrade Stalin, but soon he was again arrested. Protest strikes against the Lena shootings merged with a powerful First of May movement. The Lena events revealed that the working class had accumulated enormous revolutionary energy. In April 1912, over 300,000 workers were involved in strikes, but the First of May strike affected about 400,000 workers. The movement spread and affected even the most backward strata of the workers. Strikes took place in every district in the country. At the head of the strike movement marched the revolutionary proletariat of St. Petersburg; then came the workers of the Baltic Provinces, Moscow, the Ukraine and the Caucasus. According to official figures, the total number of workers involved in strikes in 1912 was 725,000 and in 1913, 861,000. Actually, the number was considerably higher. Economic strikes were interwoven with the political strikes. Lenin described these mass strikes as revolutionary strikes, for they were directed against the autocracy and were of nation-wide importance. The strikes enjoyed the sympathy of the majority of the working popu-

lation. They stimulated the peasants to fight against the landlords and tsarism. The factory owners retaliated to the strikes by lockouts. The police and the secret police intensified their persecution of the strikers.

The strikes proceeded under the Bolshevik slogans of: "An 8-hour day, confiscation of the landlords' estates, and a democratic republic." These slogans were calculated to rouse for the struggle against tsarism not only the workers, but also the peasants and the men in the army.

The peasant movement, which had subsided after 1907, began to flare up again. The introduction of the Stolypin reform accelerated the process of class differentiation among the rural population. The conditions of the rural poor still further deteriorated, particularly after the famine of 1911 which affected about 30,000,000 peasants. The peasant movement directed against the landlords and the kulaks assumed the militant forms of incendiarism, trespass, tree felling, refusal to pay taxes, etc. Collisions between poor peasants and kulak "khutor"-farmers became more and more frequent.

Revolutionary outbreaks occurred also in the army. In 1912, a revolt broke out among the troops who were stationed in Turkestan, and fierce reprisals were taken against the mutineers. In June 1913, 52 sailors of the Baltic Fleet were tried by naval court-martial in Kronstadt on the charge of conspiring to cause a revolt. Strikes in protest against this trial of the revolutionary sailors broke out, and this indicated that the class-conscious working-class movement in tsarist Russia constituted a powerful political force.

As Comrade Stalin said, the mass revolutionary strikes showed that "... in Russia a tremendous popular revolution was rising, headed by the most revolutionary proletariat in the world, which possessed such an important ally as the revolutionary peasantry of Russia" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 17-18).

The Bolshevik *Pravda*. The struggle that was waged by the proletariat was led by the Bolsheviks and proceeded under Bolshevik slogans. The revolutionary upswing created the urgent need for a militant daily political newspaper that could be read by the broad masses of the workers. Under the direction of Comrade Stalin, who had escaped from exile in Vologda, preparations were made for the publication of a popular daily newspaper, the *Pravda*.

In January 1912, the workers began to contribute funds for the purpose of starting such a workers' newspaper. Contributions came in from all parts of Russia. As Lenin wrote "... the creation of *Pravda* remains outstanding proof of the class consciousness, energy and solidarity of the Russian workers" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 45).

The first issue of *Pravda*, which Comrade Stalin edited, appeared on April 22 (May 5 new style). That is why we now celebrate May 5 as Workers' Press Day. The work of the *Pravda* was guided from abroad by Lenin. Its first editor was Comrade Stalin and its first editorial secretary was V. M. Molotov, who devoted much time and energy to the paper. Among the members of the staff were K. E. Voroshilov, M. I. Kalinin and Y. M. Sverdlov. Maxim Gorky also contributed to the paper.

*Pravda* was the organizer of the revolutionary masses and directed all the mass campaigns that were organized by the Bolsheviks. Of considerable importance among these campaigns was the insurance campaign. In June 1912, an act was passed to insure the workers in case of sickness and accidents. The insurance fund was to be managed by insurance boards on which the workers were to be represented. Notwithstanding the grave defects of this law, *Pravda* called upon the workers to take part in the election of the insurance boards and the elections passed off successfully. This insurance campaign was of great importance because it helped to organize very wide masses for the revolutionary struggle.

*Pravda* trained a whole generation of worker-Bolsheviks who helped Lenin and Stalin to recreate the mass Bolshevik Party in the period of the revolutionary upswing. As Comrade Stalin wrote: "The old *Pravda* was undoubtedly the harbinger of the coming of glorious victories of the Russian proletariat" ("On the Occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of *Pravda*," Stalin's article published in *Pravda* No. 93 of May 5, 1922).

*Pravda* was constantly subjected to the persecution of the police. In the first year of its existence the police raided the printing plant and destroyed the current issue of the paper no less than forty times. To prevent this, the workers would come to the printing plant at night and take the freshly printed newspapers away before the police arrived. The newspaper often had to change its name. In July 1914, just before the First World War, *Pravda's* premises were wrecked and its staff was arrested.

## 19. THE FOURTH STATE DUMA

**The Elections to the Fourth State Duma.** In 1912, the term of the Third State Duma expired. The tsar's government dissolved it and appointed elections to the Fourth Duma. These elections took place in an atmosphere of repression and persecution, which had become exceptionally intense after the assassination of Stolypin in 1911.

The Bolsheviks decided to utilize the elections for the purpose of conducting a new mass campaign against tsarism.

To be nearer to Russia, and to direct the election campaign, Lenin, in the summer of 1912, removed from Paris to Cracow. In Russia the Bolshevik election campaign was led by Comrade Stalin who, in September 1912, had again escaped from exile and had returned to St. Petersburg. The editorial offices of *Pravda* were used as staff headquarters for organizing the working class for the campaign. The Bolsheviks issued a document, drafted by Comrade Stalin, entitled "The Mandate of the Workingmen of St. Petersburg to Their Worker Deputy."

At election meetings the Bolsheviks denounced and exposed the compromising tactics of the Liquidators, and emerged victorious at the elections. Often the police came to the assistance of the Liquidators and banned meetings of workers' representatives. The workers voted in their separate curiae, apart from the rest of the population. Five Bolsheviks were elected by the workers to the State Duma—in the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Vladimir, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav and Kostroma gubernias. A sixth Deputy elected on the Bolshevik panel turned out to be an agent provocateur. The Mensheviks secured the election of seven of their candidates, but these were in gubernias where there were no workers' curiae.

The Fourth State Duma, which assembled at the end of 1912, was as much a Black Hundred and Octobrist Duma as the Third Duma had been. Of a total of 410 Deputies, 170 were Rights. The Octobrists, who constituted the government party and had nearly 100 Deputies, were adherents of the Rights. The Cadets had 50 Deputies. They differed from the Octobrists only in that they indulged in "Left" phrases and in the Duma they acted jointly with the Octobrists. The petty bourgeoisie was represented by ten Trudoviki and seven Mensheviks.

**The Bolsheviks in the Fourth State Duma.** At first the Bolsheviks in the Fourth State Duma formed a single group with the Mensheviks, but the latter, taking advantage of their majority of one vote, systematically prevented the Bolsheviks from speaking in the Duma. In conformity with the decision of the Central Committee of the Party, the Bolshevik Deputies left the joint group and formed an independent Bolshevik group. The group maintained close contact with the masses of the workers and conducted extensive activities among them; it received numerous letters, declarations, resolutions, instructions and greetings from workers in all parts of Russia. One of the most effective means it employed for using the floor of the Duma was to interpellate the government in cases of acts of lawlessness and tyranny. The Bolshevik Deputies conducted their activities in the Duma under the direction of the Party Central Committee and of Lenin. The Deputies used to receive directives from Lenin and on several occasions went abroad to consult with him.

Comrade Stalin, who was in St. Petersburg, directly guided the activities of the Bolshevik group in the Duma.

**The Works of Lenin and Stalin on the National Question.** The growth of jingoism among the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties due to the intensification of national oppression during the period of reaction made it particularly necessary for the Bolshevik Party to explain to the masses the essence of the national question and its role in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

In 1913, two classical works on the national question appeared: Lenin's *Critical Notes on the National Question*, and Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question*. These two books provided the proletariat with the theoretical basis of the Bolshevik program on the national and colonial problem.

In the autumn of 1913, Lenin convened a conference of the Central Committee in the village of Poronino, in Galicia, where he then lived, to discuss the national question. This conference adopted a resolution, which Lenin had drafted, and endorsed the slogan which had been substantiated in the works of Lenin and Stalin, namely, the right of nations to self-determination, including secession. The conference also emphasized that the preservation of the militant and solid Party of the proletariat, undivided by national barriers, was an essential condition for victory in the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed nations.

**The Preparation of the World War.** In the epoch of imperialism great changes took place in the relations between the capitalist countries. As a result of the process of uneven economic development, Germany, at the beginning of the twentieth century, outpaced France and Great Britain in the sphere of industry. The magnates of German finance capital, in conjunction with the Prusso-German militarists, made energetic preparations for a European war. They drilled it into the minds of the German people that Germany's powerful war industry, the superior armament of her vast army and her navy would make victory certain, and held out the prospect of Germany becoming the ruler of the world. The Pan-German League, the imperialist organization which they formed, was convinced that Germany could achieve victory over France and Russia as long as Russia was fettered by the autocratic system. The chief obstacle to German domination, particularly on the sea, in the opinion of the German imperialists, was Great Britain, and against that country they prepared for a ruthless naval war. On the other hand, the chief object of Great Britain's foreign policy was to crush Germany's might with the aid of France, with whom she had concluded an agreement on this score in 1904.

Thus, in the forefront stood the conflict of interests of British and German imperialism, of which the latter was particularly aggressive.

Second, to that came the conflict of interests of imperialist Germany and tsarist Russia.

German imperialism was driving towards the Near East, into Turkey. The German banks gained control of the building of the railway that was to link Germany with Turkey, and German military instructors directed the organization of Turkish military forces in preparation for war against Russia and Great Britain.

The growth of Germany's economic and political influence in the Turkish empire would have placed her in control of the Black Sea Straits.

Ruling circles in Russia became increasingly imbued with the thought that "the road to Constantinople lies through Berlin," that is to say, through the destruction of the German empire.

Lenin described Great Britain, Germany and tsarist Russia as "three big highway robbers" and the chief factors in the world war, while the other countries were merely "non-independent allies." He emphasized that while the war for the redivision of the world affected the interests of *all* the imperialist powers, the chief instigator was Germany.

In the struggle for the redivision of the world all the participants in the world slaughter drew up predatory plans.

The plans of the German imperialists included the creation of a great German empire that was to embrace so-called "Middle Europe," to seize the Baltic Provinces and Poland, dismember Russia, deprive her of the Ukraine, subjugate the Balkan Peninsula and Turkey, deprive Great Britain of Egypt and India, and push France away from the English Channel, etc.

The plans of Austria, Germany's ally, were, with the aid of Germany, to dismember Serbia, annex Russian Poland and to subjugate the Ukraine and the Balkan Peninsula.

Great Britain's plans were to crush her principal rival, Germany, to destroy her navy and mercantile fleet, to seize the German colonies, and also to deprive Turkey of Mesopotamia and Palestine and finally annex Egypt.

The plans of France were to regain Alsace-Lorraine and seize the left bank of the Rhine, to crush Germany's military power, share the German colonies with Great Britain, and take part in the partition of the Turkish empire.

The plans of tsarist Russia were to gain possession of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, to seize Turkish Armenia, to dismember Austria-Hungary, and establish her influence in the Balkan Peninsula.

Japan's plans were to take advantage of the war in Europe to seize China with the assistance of Russian tsarism, and in the event of Russia's defeat to seize the Russian Far East.



Notwithstanding fierce repression by the police and the gendarmes, the Baku workers, supported by the workers of St. Petersburg and other industrial centres, staunchly continued the struggle for two months.

In response to the appeal of the Bolsheviks, 90,000 workers in St. Petersburg struck work in solidarity with the Baku workers. On July 11, 200,000 workers were out on strike in that city. Meetings were continuously held under the slogans: "Comrades of Baku, we are with you!", "Victory for the workers of Baku is victory for us," etc. One such revolutionary demonstration ended in the shooting down of workers at the Putilov Works.

In retaliation to this outrage, the whole of the working class of St. Petersburg rose in protest; the workers of all the big plants downed tools and poured into the streets for a revolutionary demonstration. Collisions occurred between workers and troops which developed into barricade fighting. The capital was transformed into a military camp. *Pravda* was suppressed.

When these events were at their height Poincaré, President of France, arrived in St. Petersburg to conduct negotiations with the tsar. During these negotiations the tsarist government agreed that France and Russia should jointly counteract Austria-Hungary's attack on Serbia, which was likely to lead to a world war.

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# THE SECOND BOURGEOIS- DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

## *Chapter V*

### TSARIST RUSSIA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1914-MARCH 1917)

#### 20. RUSSIA'S PART IN THE WORLD WAR

**The Beginning of the World War.** In July 1914, the world imperialist war, of which Germany was the instigator, broke out. This war was fought between two groups of imperialist countries: one, headed by Germany, constituted the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey); the other, headed by the British and French imperialists, constituted the Triple Entente (Great Britain, France and Russia, and also Serbia and Belgium). In 1914, Japan joined the Triple Entente; Italy did the same in 1915, and the United States joined it in 1917. In all, 33 countries were involved in the war, and 74,000,000 men were mobilized for the various armies. The war cost 30,000,000 human lives and about 300,000,000,000 rubles in money.

As regards the number of countries that were involved all over the globe it was a world war, but in its aims it was an imperialist war, a war for the forcible redivision of the world.

As Lenin wrote: "In its real nature this war is not a national but an imperialist war.

"... The war is being waged between two groups of oppressors, between two robbers, to decide how to divide the booty, who is to plunder Turkey and the colonies" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIX, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 200).

This predatory war for the redivision of the world was prepared for in the course of decades and affected the interests of all the imperialist countries. Its immediate cause was Austria-Hungary's plan to crush Serbia, a plan that was supported by Germany, who counted on securing a redivision of the world in her own favour as the result of the development of the Austro-Serbian war into a world war.

The spark that ignited the conflagration of the world war was the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. The assassination was committed on June 28, 1914, by a nineteen-year-old student named Gavrila Princip on the instructions of a Serbian army officers' nationalist organization. Austria-Hungary, instigated by Germany, presented Serbia with an ultimatum that was couched in terms that made its rejection by the Serbian government inevitable. On the advice of the Russian government, however, the Serbian government agreed to nearly all of the terms of the ultimatum, but in spite of this the Austrian Minister, who already had his trunks packed, left Belgrade, and Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. After receiving the assurances of President Poincaré that France was ready to support Russia and Serbia, the tsarist government intervened in the conflict.

Proclaiming her solidarity with Serbia, Russia began to mobilize. Germany called upon the tsarist government to stop mobilizing. The tsarist government refused to do so, whereupon, Germany, on August 1, declared war on Russia. France began to mobilize. On August 3, Germany declared war on France, and on that same day German troops crossed the Belgian frontier. Next morning the British government presented an ultimatum to Germany demanding her withdrawal from Belgian territory, but without waiting for a reply the British government, in the afternoon of August 4, issued an order to mobilize the British army. At midnight it declared war on Germany. Thus commenced the first world imperialist war of 1914-1918.

**The War on the Eastern Front.** At the very beginning of August three fronts were formed in belligerent Europe: a Western Front, which stretched from the North Sea to Switzerland; an Eastern or Russian Front, which stretched from the Baltic Sea to Rumania, and the Balkan Front, which ran along the Danube. The Russian Front was split up into two almost independent operative sectors—the Northwestern and Southwestern sectors. The Northwestern Front ran from the Baltic Sea to the lower reaches of the river Bug, and the Southwestern Front ran along the Russo-Austrian frontier to Rumania. On the Balkan Front the Serbian army fought the Austro-Hungarian army.

After violating the neutrality of Belgium the German army made a drive towards Paris. The French government called upon Russia forthwith to launch an offensive on the Eastern Front with the object of diverting the largest possible number of German troops from the Western Front. Accordingly, two Russian armies, under the command of Generals Samsonov and Rennenkampf, were sent to invade East Prussia. Rennenkampf's army launched a successful offensive and won a big victory in the battle of Gumbinnen, but this victory was not followed up. Rennenkampf's army failed to develop

its offensive and this enabled the German Command to throw the whole weight of its forces against General Samsonov's army. The operations of the two Russian armies were not co-ordinated. From intercepted and decoded telegrams sent by General Samsonov and Rennenkampf, and also through its own spies, the German Command learned of all the movements of the Russian troops. A large part of General Samsonov's army was surrounded by the Germans in the marshy and wooded region of the Masurian Lakes and was wiped out. Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers perished. General Samsonov committed suicide.

After defeating Samsonov's army, the Germans hurled their troops against Rennenkampf's army, which had remained inactive. Rennenkampf retreated to Russian territory, losing 110,000 men. But Paris was saved. By taking the blow upon herself, Russia saved her ally France from defeat.

In August 1914, simultaneously with the unsuccessful offensive in East Prussia, four Russian armies launched an offensive against Austria-Hungary on the Southwestern Front. The armies commanded by General Brusilov and Ruzsky defeated the Austro-Hungarian armies, occupied Lvov and Gorlice and surrounded the fortress of Przemyśl. Nearly the whole of Galicia was occupied by the tsarist forces.

In the middle of September the German armies came to the assistance of Austria-Hungary by launching a wide offensive from the foothills of the Carpathians. In the middle of December 1914, the offensive was halted on both sides.

In the autumn of 1914, a new front was formed—the Caucasian Front. Two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, stole their way from the Mediterranean into the Black Sea and bombarded Feodosia and Odessa. After this, Turkey, who was bound by a military alliance with Germany, went to war against Russia. In December 1914, the Turkish army was defeated in the battle of Sari Quamish, after which the Russian troops on the Turkish Front slowly pushed forward. On the Austro-German Front, however, the belligerent sides were extremely exhausted and consequently passed over to trench warfare, meanwhile mustering forces for new decisive blows. At the end of April and the beginning of May 1915, a German army, under the command of General Mackenzen, supported on both flanks by Austrians, pierced the Russian Front between Gorlice and Tarnov thus compelling the Russian armies to beat a hasty retreat. The Austro-Hungarian troops occupied Przemyśl and Lvov. In July, another German army occupied the fortress of Ivangorod. At the end of July German troops occupied Warsaw and Brest-Litovsk. The Germans developed their offensive and occupied Grodno and Vilna. Thus, by the autumn of 1915, Poland, Lithuania, part of the Baltic Provinces

and Volhynia had fallen into the hands of Germany and Austria-Hungary. From May to October 1915, the Russian army lost over 150,000 men in killed and more than 1,000,000 in wounded and prisoners. Towards the end of September 1915, operations on the Eastern Front were reduced to trench warfare. This front now stretched in an almost straight line from the river Dniester to the Gulf of Riga. Thus, in the first period of the world war tsarism sustained grave military defeats.

Military operations on the Eastern Front in 1914-1915 ended in the defeat of the Russian armies. This made the loss of the war by Russia a foregone conclusion. Thus, tsarist Russia's unpreparedness for war made itself felt at the very outset. The Russian army was inadequately supplied with ammunition, heavy artillery, aircraft, materials for chemical warfare and equipment. There were cases when men went to the front without weapons and had to pick up those left by the men who were killed in battle. Sometimes a unit had only one rifle for every three men. The army was supplied with boots with rotten-leather soles, with greatcoats which became useless after the first downpour of rain, with provisions that had gone bad, and so forth. All sorts of sharpers and swindlers speculated in war contracts and made fabulous profits. Military headquarters, army supply departments and munition plants swarmed with spies, adventurers, scoundrels and profiteers, incompetent generals and downright traitors.

A German and Austrian espionage organization, headed by Colonel of Gendarmes Myasoyedov, was already operating in Russia before the war. Even the War Minister Sukhomlinov was accused of espionage. The effect of sabotage and espionage was severely felt at the very outset of the war. The stocks of military supplies were exhausted during the first month, and no new supplies were forthcoming. The Ministry of War had not supplied the army with shells and small-arms ammunition. Output in the government small-arms factories had been reduced by three-fourths and of the ordnance works by one-half. Treachery and espionage caused the death of thousands of men at the front. Sometimes vital orders were communicated by radio uncoded and were intercepted by the Germans, who were thus able to follow the movements of the Russian armies. Headquarters staffs were incompetent and the orders they issued only caused anarchy and confusion. But even under these conditions the Russian army, as always, displayed magnificent fighting qualities. The courage, endurance, heroism and initiative of individual soldiers and units often saved the situation and helped to extricate a force from encirclement in which it was threatened by complete extermination.

**The Treachery of the Second International.** From the very first days of the war the imperialist bourgeoisie in all the belligerent

countries tried to deceive the masses and make them believe that the war had been caused by the aggression of the enemy and was therefore a defensive war. The parties that were affiliated to the Second International betrayed the principles of internationalism and Socialism and helped the bourgeoisie to perpetrate this deception upon the masses. Playing upon the natural love of the common people for their country, they did all in their power to rally the masses for the imperialist war by concealing its true character and urging the necessity of defending the bourgeois fatherland.

On August 4, 1914, the German Social-Democrats, in defiance of the resolutions passed at international congresses of the Second International, voted with the German bourgeoisie in the Reichstag in favour of war credits. That same day, the French Socialists also voted for the war credits. "We are being attacked, we are defending ourselves," they assured the workers and peasants. In a number of countries (France, Belgium, Great Britain) the leaders of the socialist parties entered the imperialist governments. Thus, as Lenin wrote: "Overwhelmed by opportunism, the Second International has died" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, New York, 1930, p. 89). It broke up into separate social-chauvinist parties, engaged in war with one another. By the time the war broke out the opportunists degenerated into social-chauvinists.

**The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries as the Vehicles of Chauvinism in Russia.** At the beginning of the war chauvinist fever ran as high among the petty bourgeoisie in Russia as it did in other countries. In Petrograd, as St. Petersburg was renamed after the outbreak of war, university students who were called up for military service marched in procession to the Winter Palace to pay homage to the tsar. The Cadet-minded bourgeoisie called for the cessation of "internal controversy" for the duration of the war. At the very first session of the State Duma that was held after the outbreak of the war, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Trudoviki associated themselves with the solemn declaration made by the Octobrist Rodz-yanko, the President of the Duma, who called for "unity between the tsar and his faithful people." Behind the guise of socialist phrases, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks helped the bourgeoisie to deceive the people by calling upon them to "defend the fatherland," hence the term "Defencist" that was applied to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. In the autumn of 1914, the Belgian Socialist Cabinet Minister Vandervelde sent a telegram to the Russian Socialists calling upon them to help in the prosecution of the war. In answer to this the Mensheviks wrote: "By our activities in Russia we are not hindering the prosecution of the war." Thus, the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, like all the social-chauvinists of the Second International, openly spread

chauvinistic propaganda among the masses. The most dangerous to the cause of the proletariat were the concealed social-chauvinists, the so-called Centrists, like Kautsky, Martov, Trotsky and others, who, like the avowed social-chauvinists, stood for the defence of the bourgeois "fatherland," called for the cessation of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie for the duration of the war and, deceiving the masses as regards the actual war criminals, covered up their own treachery with "Left" phrases about fighting for peace.

**The Bolsheviks' Fight against the War and the Social-Chauvinists.** The only party in the International which saved the honour of the international proletariat was the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin and Stalin. From the very outset of the war the Bolsheviks exposed its imperialist character and the treacherous conduct of the Second International.

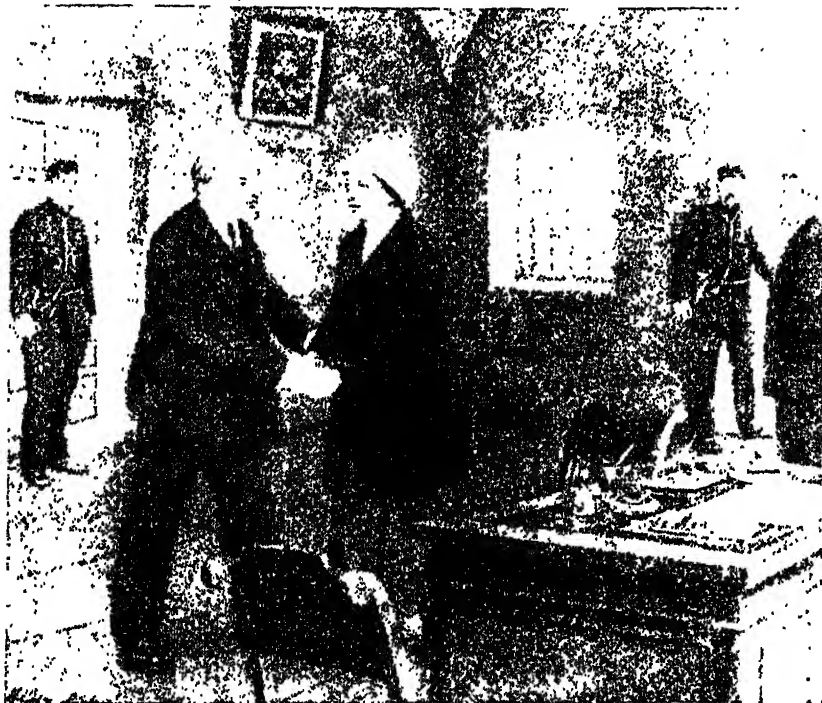
Lenin was in Austria when the war broke out. The Austrian imperialists hastened to arrest the leader of the world proletariat and then deported him from the country. Lenin went to Switzerland and there launched a campaign to expose the predatory, imperialist character of the war, and also the treachery of international social-chauvinism.

"The Bolsheviks held that there are two kinds of wars:

"a) *Just* wars, wars that are not wars of conquest but wars of liberation, waged to defend the people from foreign attack and from attempts to enslave them, or to liberate the people from capitalist slavery, or, lastly, to liberate colonies and dependent countries from the yoke of imperialism; and

"b) *unjust* wars, wars of conquest, waged to conquer and enslave foreign countries and foreign nations" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 167-168).

Lenin regarded the World War of 1914 as an unjust war of conquest and called for a determined struggle against it to the extent of overthrowing the imperialist governments by means of revolution. He advanced the slogan of transforming the imperialist war into civil war and called upon the proletarians of each country to wage a revolutionary struggle for the defeat of "their own" government. The slogan "For the defeat of the tsarist government" issued by the Bolsheviks meant not only the fulfilment of their international duty as Socialists. The Bolsheviks' fight for their slogans was one to save their country, to preserve its independence, which could be guaranteed only if the workers and peasants won victory over tsarism and imperialism. The Russian social-chauvinists and the Centrists headed by Trotsky opposed Lenin's slogan calling for the defeat of tsarism. Rebutting their arguments, Lenin said that "... to justify participation in the imperialist war, to advance in this war the slogan 'against defeat'



N. K. Krupskaya Visits V. I. Lenin in the Examining Magistrate's Room of the Prison in Novy Targ in 1914. *From a painting by M. Sokolov*

means to act not only as an anti-socialist, but also as an anti-national politician" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, New York, 1930, p. 190).

From the very outbreak of the war Lenin set out to form a new, Third International in place of the Second International, which had suffered a shameful collapse.

Lenin's policy of a complete rupture with the imperialists and of waging a determined struggle against the social-chauvinists and Centrists was vigorously carried out in Russia by the Bolshevik members of the Duma. They constituted the only legal group of Bolsheviks that had the opportunity of appealing to the masses, for with the outbreak of the war all the Bolshevik newspapers were suppressed, the prominent Party workers were arrested and exiled, the workers' organizations were wrecked and the more class-conscious and advanced workers were called up for military service and sent to the front. The five Bolshevik members of the Duma toured the country, visiting



factories, holding talks with the workers and explaining to them the aggressive and predatory nature of the war. In the Duma itself the Bolshevik members openly proclaimed their opposition to the war and refused to vote for the war credits.

In November 1914, all the Bolshevik members of the Duma were arrested by the police just when they were holding a secret conference with Party workers, and in February 1915, they were put on trial. At the trial they conducted themselves like staunch fighters for the cause of the proletariat. Only Kamenev, who had been arrested with the Duma Deputies, behaved at the trial like a renegade. He declared that he differed fundamentally with the Bolsheviks on the question of the war and that he agreed with the Defencists. On receiving a report of this trial Lenin expressed his approval of the conduct of the workers' Duma Deputies and denounced the disgraceful, craven and despicable conduct of Kamenev.

The tsarist court sentenced the five Bolshevik members of the Duma to lifelong exile in Siberia.

But even while in exile the Bolsheviks continued to oppose the war and to combat social-chauvinism. Comrade Stalin who, in 1913, had been exiled (for the sixth time) to the remote Turukhansk Region, although cut off from Lenin and the central Party bodies, took Lenin's stand on the question of war, peace and revolution.

The hamlet of Kureika, where Comrade Stalin lived, was two hundred kilometres from the nearest village of Monastyrskoye and newspapers arrived there very rarely; the mail came once in two or three months and letters from comrades were delivered with great difficulty. Nevertheless, at the end of 1914, Comrade Stalin received Lenin's theses in which he formulated the Bolshevik attitude towards the war. In the summer of 1915, Comrade Stalin called a conference in Monastyrskoye of the Bolsheviks in exile. This conference denounced Kamenev's craven and treacherous conduct at the trial. In 1916 Comrade Stalin received copies of the Bolshevik magazine *Insurance Questions*, whereupon he sent greetings to the editorial staff of that magazine in which he emphasized that in his opinion the chief task of the Bolshevik press was *ideologically to insure* the working class of Russia against the corrupting, anti-proletarian, chauvinistic propaganda of the Menshevik Defencists.

A similar attitude of uncompromising opposition to opportunism in every form was displayed by Y. M. Sverdlov, who was in exile with Comrade Stalin, by G. K. Orjonikidze, who was serving a sentence of penal servitude, and by the other Bolsheviks.

## 21. BRUSILOV'S BREAKTHROUGH

**The Military-Strategical Situation in the Beginning of 1916.** Germany's plans for a *blitzkrieg* collapsed; the war became a prolonged one. Germany had less chance of winning a prolonged war than the Entente, as the latter possessed large resources of manpower and materiel. In 1915, the German High Command concentrated its main forces on the Eastern Front and strove to defeat the Russian army and compel Russia to conclude a separate peace. Its aim was to rid itself, in this way, of the second front in the East and to concentrate all its forces for the struggle in the West. The Germans did succeed in capturing a large area of Russian territory, but they failed to rout the Russian armies and the second front was not liquidated.

By the autumn of 1915, the German High Command came to the conclusion that it was useless to continue active operations against Russia and therefore began to make preparations for decisive operations on the Western Front. Leading Entente circles also realized that the respite the Entente had received in 1915 at Russia's expense had ended, and they too began to prepare for the anticipated German offensive on the Western Front. The military situation compelled the Allies to decide to smash their opponents in the Western and Eastern theatres of war by a series of successive decisive blows.

In the beginning of 1916, tsarist Russia intensified military operations on the Caucasian Front. In spite of the incredibly difficult fighting conditions in mountain terrain the Caucasian army stormed and captured Erzerum in February and Trebizond in April. Another Russian army launched a drive in the direction of Persia. But the offensive against Turkey was not pressed home as the Allies did not wish Turkey to be utterly defeated by Russia.

The strategical position of the Entente countries had now considerably improved. Their military technical forces had grown. The French and British armies were equipped with splendid artillery, and having succeeded in organizing the mass production of shells they now had a plentiful supply of these. Particularly well equipped was the fortress of Verdun, which covered the road to Paris. Lacking adequate forces for an offensive on other parts of the front the Germans, in February 1916, launched a drive precisely against this fortress in the hope of breaking through and gaining a decisive success. Within a short space of time the Germans fired against the Verdun fortifications over 2,000,000 shells. At the crucial moment they even resorted to asphyxiating gases, for it was the Germans who first used poison gas in the First World War.

To divert some of the German forces from Verdun the Allies demanded that the Russian armies should launch an offensive on the

Eastern Front. This offensive had the added object of preventing the defeat of Italy, against whom the Austro-German command was preparing to strike a blow at Trentino.

**The Russian Army's Offensive on the Southwestern Front.** In conformity with the plans of the Russian High Command the offensive operations were to commence on the Russian Western Front from the region of Molodeczno and drive towards Oszmiana-Vilna. A supplementary blow was to be struck on the Northern Front in the region of Dvinsk. The Southwestern Front was to keep on the defensive. But General Brusilov, who shortly before had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Front, was strongly opposed to this plan. At the conference held at General Headquarters in Mogilev on April 14, 1916, he argued that all the fronts should launch an offensive, and do so simultaneously. The war, he said, could not be won by defensive tactics, and the Russian army and its allies now possessed all the facilities for launching a general and decisive offensive.

Brusilov, an outstanding leader in the Russian army in the period of the First World War, held the view that military objectives could be achieved only by active methods. In this respect he was one of the last representatives of the Suvorov school in the old Russian army. What distinguished him as a military leader was his constant striving to employ new methods on the basis of a study of the experience of war. He demanded thorough preparation for an operation and a clear understanding of the general strategical tasks. He was of the opinion that preparations for an offensive should be made along the whole front and that blows should be struck on several sectors simultaneously so that the enemy should not know where the main blow was to be struck.

Brusilov drew up the following plan of operation. He decided to strike the main blow in the Luck direction, on the right flank of his front, which was capable of rendering most assistance to the Russian Western Front where offensive operations were about to begin. Making clever use of camouflage, he did all possible to ensure that his preparations were concealed from the enemy. All troop movements were performed at night. No conversations about the preparations were conducted over the telephone. Not a single person unconnected with the forthcoming operations knew anything about them. All this ensured not only thorough preparation but also that the enemy would be taken completely by surprise.

Brusilov's army launched its offensive at dawn on June 4, 1916. After artillery preparation lasting twenty-nine hours, the infantry charged the Austro-German positions. After ten days' fighting the enemy's defensive system was breached on a front of ninety kilometres and Luck was captured. Within a few days the army captured the whole

of Bukovina and part of South Galicia and reached the passes of the Carpathian mountains. Brusilov's successful offensive compelled the enemy to transfer his reserves from the Italian and French Fronts to the Eastern Front. The German High Command effected such a transfer.

Brusilov's blow saved the Italians from defeat and eased the position of the French at Verdun. The whole Austro-German Front from Polesie to the Rumanian frontier was disorganized, and this created the possibility of inflicting decisive defeat upon the German coalition. But neither the Allies nor the Russian High Command followed up Brusilov's success in time. The Anglo-French troops failed to pass to the offensive at this crucial moment for the German army, thus enabling the German High Command to transfer considerable forces from the Western to the Eastern Front. Failing to receive the support of the other armies, Brusilov's offensive was checked, after fierce fighting involving heavy casualties, in the marshy terrain near the river Stokhod. This lack of co-ordination of active Allied operations was one of the factors which helped to prolong the war and to ease Germany's position in 1916.

## 22. GROWTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS

**Economic Chaos in the Country.** Despite the successes the Russian armies achieved on the Turkish and Southwestern Fronts it was already evident that tsarist Russia had lost the war. The main reason for the defeat of tsarism was Russia's economic and technical backwardness. The technically backward war industry was incapable of supplying the army with the munitions of war. In the rear, economic chaos reigned. Although the number of workers employed in industry almost doubled, the productivity of labour steadily declined.

Shortage of fuel led to the cutting down of production in the factories and mills. In 1916, thirty-six blast furnaces were blown out. The steel mills produced only half the metal that was needed for the war industry and metal deliveries to plants were rationed.

The railways could not cope with the traffic. The transport system was dislocated, as a result both of repeated military withdrawals and of the flood of refugees who poured from the regions occupied by the Germans into the hinterland of Russia. During hasty retreats large quantities of rolling stock were left in the hands of the enemy. Wrecked cars and locomotives blocked the roads. To allow trains to pass, trains ahead of them were sometimes thrown over the railway embankment. Owing to the lack of transport facilities even urgent supplies of war materiel obtained from the United States, Great Britain and France were not delivered on time. The military port of Archangel was so congested with war materiel that the lower cases literally sank into the ground under the weight of those on top of them.

The utter dislocation of the transport system intensified the food crisis. Over a billion poods of grain from preceding harvests lay rotting at remote railway stations while the population of the towns were living on meagre bread rations. The army received only half the regulation rations. The price of bread rose over 50 per cent. In the autumn of 1916, fixed grain prices were introduced, but the landlords and kulaks ignored them. Profiteering in grain increased, while long queues of starving people lined up outside the bakeries.

Agricultural output dropped considerably during the period of the war. About 14,000,000, or 47 per cent, of the adult male population had been conscripted for the army, and it was the most able-bodied section of the rural population that was taken. Agriculture also suffered from the continuous requisition of horses and cattle; during the period of the war the number of horses in the country was reduced by 5,000,000.

In 1916 the sown area in the country was 85 per cent of that of 1909. Landlord farming, deprived of the cheap labour of day labourers and peasants, deteriorated. The landlord farms were largely cultivated by prisoners of war, but their labour was very unproductive.

Particularly disastrous were the effects of the war upon the currency of the country. The colossal expenditure entailed by the war was covered by the issue of paper currency. The value of the ruble dropped and the cost of living steadily rose. To meet the war expenditure the tsarist government floated internal loans and also appealed again and again for loans to the Allies. To pay for war contracts placed abroad it received from Great Britain, France and the United States sums amounting to 7,769,000,000 rubles.

The defeats at the front and economic chaos at home roused the alarm of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie had been making unprecedented profits out of war contracts. Since tsarism proved to be incapable of organizing a victorious war, the Russian bourgeoisie tried to take charge of the organization of the war effort and achieved great influence in affairs of state.

In the summer of 1915, the bourgeois representatives in rural and urban local government bodies formed an organization, known as the "Zemgor," which demanded a voice in the distribution of supplies for the army. At about the same time so-called War Industry Committees were set up which undertook to fulfil part of the war contracts. Proclaiming the slogan of "everything for the war, all for the war," the bourgeoisie launched a campaign to increase output in the factories.

The bourgeois opposition during the war years was led by a body set up in the State Duma in August 1915, and known as the Progressive bloc. It included nearly all the bourgeois parties, the Octobrists, Progressives, Cadets and part of the Nationalists.



Russian Soldiers on the March

Backed by the Mensheviks and the Trudovik group, this bloc demanded the formation of a "Cabinet of confidence," that is to say, the appointment of Cabinet Ministers who would enjoy the confidence of the bourgeois majority in the Duma. The tsarist government, however, refused to make any concessions and in September 1915, it issued a decree to prorogue the Duma "for recess."

During the war Russia's economic dependence upon British and French capital greatly increased. In return for credits amounting to 3,000,000,000 rubles, Great Britain demanded that the tsarist government should transfer to London a part of Russia's gold reserve as security for payment on war contracts. At the same time the Allies continuously kept demanding fresh reinforcements from Russia. In April 1916, the French "Socialists" Albert Thomas and Viviani were sent to Russia to demand the despatch of 400,000 Russian soldiers to France. Only a proletarian revolution could save Russia from being utterly converted into a colony of foreign imperialism.

**The Revolutionary Situation in the Country.** At the end of 1915, a revolutionary situation began to develop in the country. The war and the economic chaos caused extreme discontent among the masses of the working people who were obliged to bear the whole brunt of the war. The conditions of the working class had greatly deteriorated during the period of the war. The insignificant "war bonus" was insufficient to cover the rising cost of living. High prices, shortage of food and the eternal queues, particularly wore out the women work-

ers who were obliged to maintain their children without the assistance of their husbands who were away at the front. About 40 per cent of the industrial workers had been conscripted for the war and it was the more class-conscious and progressive workers, and also young workers, who were sent off first. Their places in the factories were taken by workers from the rural districts and by women and juveniles. To compel the workers to work harder and to rouse their support for the war, the War Industry Committees formed "workers' groups." In September 1915, at a meeting of representatives of the workers of the factories of Petrograd, the Bolsheviks secured the adoption of a resolution against the election of such a group to the Central War Industries Committee. The result was that only an insignificant number of workers took part in the election of the "workers' group" which took place in November. The Mensheviks, who advocated "class peace" between the workers and the bourgeoisie, supported the "workers' group," and the Menshevik Kuzma Gvozdev, an arrant Defencist, became the head of it.

In the spring of 1915, the strike movement began to assume wide proportions and the strikes in the central industrial region were exceptionally turbulent. At the Novo Kostroma Linen Mills the workers demanded an increase in wages and marched in procession to the offices of the mill to present this demand. They were met by troops who fired at them, killing and wounding scores of them. The Commander of the Corps of Gendarmes sent a telegram to the Governor of Kostroma stating: "Approve your action. Find ringleaders. Court-martial them."

The same brutal treatment was meted out by troops and police to the workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk who marched to the Town Hall to present their demands. The shooting down of the workers in Kostroma and Ivanovo-Voznesensk called forth a wave of protest strikes. The strike of the workers of the Putilov Works, which was engaged on war orders, assumed a militant character, and was joined by the new workers, among whom the Bolsheviks employed at the plant had been very active. The Putilov strike was supported by the entire proletariat of Petrograd. In the autumn, mass strikes began to spread all over the country.

January 9, 1916, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, was commemorated by the workers by a political strike. The political strike wave reached its peak in October 1916, when these strikes were accompanied by demonstrations in which the workers carried the revolutionary slogans: "Down with the war!", "Down with the autocracy!"

The movement among the workers stimulated the struggle of the peasants. The imperialist war had finally divorced the peasants from the bourgeoisie, for it revealed to them how utterly groundless were their hopes of receiving land and peace from the tsar and his bourgeois allies. The impoverishment and ruin created in the countryside by

the war strengthened anti-war temper in the most backward and remote villages. The Department of Police noted the growth of propaganda conducted by peasants against the further recruitment of soldiers for the war. One such rural propagandist is reported to have said: "Our tsar is throwing the people into the war like an extravagant cook throwing logs in the stove."

Information about the disastrous condition of peasant farming reached the army. Worn out by the protracted war and enraged by the ruination of their farms at home the soldiers refused to go into action against the enemy, voluntarily surrendered, inflicted wounds upon themselves and deserted in masses. In 1916 the number of deserters was estimated to have exceeded 1,500,000.

**The Activities of the Bolsheviks During the War.** The Bolsheviks developed extensive activities in the army and in the navy. They formed underground military organizations in the army units and printed and distributed revolutionary leaflets in which they called for fraternization between the soldiers of the belligerent armies and stressed that their common enemy was the imperialist bourgeoisie, and that the only way they could end the war was by turning their weapons against the bourgeoisie and their governments.

In the autumn of 1915, fraternization commenced at the front. The Russian soldiers left their trenches to mingle with the enemy soldiers. The soldiers of both sides treated each other to cigarettes and understood each other perfectly even though they did not know each other's language. This fraternization strengthened the international unity of the working people in both lines of trenches.

By the end of 1916, the letters which the soldiers sent home from the front reflected their growing hatred of the war and of tsarism. One soldier wrote: "The soldiers today are not what they were during the Japanese War; under the mask of slavish obedience there burns frightful anger. It is enough to light a tiny match for this mass to flare up." The conscripted workers, many of whom had taken part in the revolution of 1905, conducted propaganda in favour of another revolution.

A number of leading Bolsheviks were active in the army. M. V. Frunze, who escaped from prison in 1915, secured a situation in the Union of the Zemstvos under the assumed name of Mikhailov. He formed an underground Bolshevik organization in Minsk and established close contacts with the soldiers on the Russian Western Front. A. A. Zhdanov, mobilized into the army, conducted energetic Bolshevik propaganda among the troops. V. V. Kuibyshev was active in the pipe works in Samara, and S. M. Kirov was active in the Caucasus, rousing the most backward and downtrodden highlanders for the struggle against tsarism. In Kiev, and later in Ekaterinoslav, L. M. Kaganovich conducted propaganda among the



workers and soldiers. In the spring of 1915, V. M. Molotov arrived in Moscow to organize a Bolshevik conference. He was arrested and exiled to Siberia, but he escaped shortly afterwards, went to Petrograd, and there directed the preparations for a new revolution.

Never had the lives of the Bolsheviks working underground been so full of danger as during the imperialist war, when those conducting revolutionary propaganda were liable to be court-martialled and shot. But the Bolsheviks were not daunted by difficulties or dangers; they knew how to be with, and at the head of, the masses, no matter what conditions prevailed.

In the endeavour to rally all the revolutionary forces for the struggle against the imperialist war the Bolsheviks conducted intense activity among the youths and workingwomen who had taken the places in industry of the men who had gone to the front.

The theoretical basis for the activities of the Bolsheviks during the period of the war was provided by Lenin's works on imperialism. In 1916, he wrote that work of genius, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* in which he showed that imperialism is the last stage in the development of capitalism and is the eve of the proletarian revolution. In this book, and in the articles he wrote in 1915-1916, he showed that imperialist wars weaken the forces of imperialism and render possible the breaking of the chain of imperialism at its weakest link. In his articles "The United States of Europe Slogan" and "The War Program of the Proletarian Revolution" he showed that it was quite possible for the proletariat to break the chain of imperialism at some one point, that Socialism could not be victorious in all countries simultaneously, that it would first achieve victory in a few countries, or even in only one country, while the other countries would for a time remain bourgeois countries. This was a new and complete theory of the socialist revolution, a theory the fundamentals of which were outlined by Lenin as early as 1905. This theory opened up a revolutionary perspective for the proletarians of the various countries, taught them to utilize the war situation for a revolutionary onslaught upon the bourgeoisie in the given country, and strengthened their confidence in the victory of the world proletarian revolution.

### 23. THE REVOLT OF THE PEOPLES IN CENTRAL ASIA IN 1916

**The National Question During the Period of the War.** The bourgeoisie in all countries proclaimed the imperialist war a war for the protection of weak nations, but actually, during the war the oppressed nationalities were forced into greater dependence than ever upon the imperialist bourgeoisie. The colonial peoples served as the source from which the belligerent armies received replenishments of "cannon fodder."

During the period of the war the movement for national liberation was rapidly heading towards a revolutionary uprising against imperialism. Lenin and Stalin pointed out that the revolutionary movement for national liberation of the oppressed nationalities was a reserve of the proletarian revolution. The Bolsheviks waged a determined struggle against national oppression in Russia and in other countries, and upheld the right of nations to self-determination and the international unity of the working class in its struggle for Socialism.

The Bolsheviks denounced the policy of national oppression pursued by tsarism and the imperialist bourgeoisie. "... As far as Russia is concerned," wrote Lenin at this time, "the war is doubly reactionary and hostile to national liberation" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, New York, 1930, p. 226).

**The Revolt in Central Asia and Kazakhstan.** The war imposed great suffering upon the oppressed peoples of tsarist Russia. In its quest for fresh sources of revenue for the purpose of financing the war, the tsarist government imposed additional taxes on the inhabitants of the outlying regions. The peoples of Central Asia were subjected to exceptionally cruel exploitation. In the settled cotton-growing regions, the exploiters enmeshed the entire population in a net of enslaving contracts. During the period of the war the area under cotton increased 50 per cent, but the peasant growers could not enjoy the produce of their labour. They delivered the greater part of their crop to the landlords in payment for rent, and sold the remainder at ridiculously low prices fixed by the government to the disadvantage of the poor peasants. Meanwhile, the price of manufactured goods rose to an enormous extent. The Uzbek peasant cotton growers were threatened by famine, as they grew scarcely any grain themselves and little grain was shipped into the region owing to the dislocation of the railways.

Conditions in the nomadic and semi-nomadic regions of Central Asia and Kazakhstan were even worse. The government continued to drive the Kirghiz and Kazakh herdsmen from their pastures in order to provide land for Russian settlers. In 1915, 1,800,000 hectares of the best land of the Kazakh and Kirghiz were granted to Russian landlords, government officials and kulaks. The continuous requisition of horses, cattle and wool for war purposes utterly ruined the herdsmen. The tyranny of the local authorities and the levies they imposed still further worsened the hard lot of the people.

The immediate cause of the extensive revolt of the working people in Central Asia was the order issued by the tsarist government in June 1916, conscripting the inhabitants from the age of nineteen to forty-three for the purpose of digging trenches and performing other work at the front, in spite of the fact that according to the laws of

tsarist Russia the non-Russian population was not liable to military service.

The Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghiz and Turkmen refused to obey this harsh order, the more so that it was issued just when the harvest was being taken in. The first to rise in revolt were the peoples of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Crowds of excited Uzbeks in the towns and villages of the Tashkent and Samarkand counties attacked the rural administration offices and demanded that the conscription lists should be destroyed. By the middle of July 1916, the revolt had spread over the whole of Ferghana. Near Jizak, in the Samarkand Region, regular battles with the tsarist troops took place, in which the latter employed artillery. The rebels cut communications between Verny (now Alma-Ata) and Tashkent, captured a trainload of arms that was being sent to be used against them, armed the peasants and entered into battle with the Russian troops. The revolt was suppressed only in October, after a punitive army had been sent against the rebels of the Semirechensk Region.

The revolt of the Kazakhs in the Turgai (now Aktyubinsk) Region which broke out in September 1916 was exceptionally prolonged and stubborn. The revolt was headed by Amangeldy Imanov. When the Kazakhs of the Turgai Region refused to obey the tsar's conscription order, the Governor of the region went to them in person to persuade them to obey. Amangeldy turned to him and said: "Permit me, worthy chief, to put one question to you. In our ignorance we do not understand: whom shall we defend in this war?" The Governor ordered the arrest of Amangeldy, but he went into hiding among the poorest sections of the Kazakhs. Shortly afterwards Amangeldy Imanov organized a large force of rebels which entered into battle with one of the punitive units at Lake Kizil-Kul. The battle lasted a whole day and the troops were forced to retreat.

At the end of October 1916, the rebels headed by Amangeldy Imanov besieged the town of Turgai, but failed to capture it. Amangeldy retreated from Turgai and fortified himself in the village of Batbakara. Here workshops were set up where armourers worked day and night making swords and other side arms. The Kazakhs were trained in the use of firearms and in military exercises. The local inhabitants supplied the rebels with food, and with fodder for their horses. A large punitive army was sent against Amangeldy, and in the middle of February 1917 this army captured Batbakara. The rebels retreated into the steppe. Later their brave leader Amangeldy took part in the revolution, joined the Bolshevik Party and died like a hero in the Civil War.

The revolt in Turkmenistan also lasted a considerable time. The Turkmen herdsmen, moving from place to place, easily evaded the tsar's troops sent against them. A special punitive

expedition of Cossack troops sent against them succeeded in forcing the rebels to cross the frontier into Persia. The revolt was suppressed with ruthless cruelty. The punitive army burned down the herdsmen's encampments, and seized their property and cattle. In a number of counties more than half the population was wiped out. The Governor General, Kuropatkin, put 347 of the rebels on trial, and of these 51 were executed. In the case of the others sentence of death was commuted to penal servitude. Several hundred rebels were exiled without trial. After the revolt was suppressed many thousands of Kirghiz and Kazakh refugees, with their families and herds, wandered into China and Mongolia, while the Turkmens crossed over into Persia. On leaving their habitations the refugees sold the remnants of their property to the rich and to the *bai* (kulaks) for a mere song; but in the countries in which they had taken refuge they were also subjected to persecution. After Soviet rule was established in Russia many of the refugees returned home.

#### 24. EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN RUSSIA BEFORE THE REVOLUTION (1907-1917)

**Education and Science.** The revolution of 1905-1907 had roused among the masses of the people a tremendous thirst for knowledge. During the period of the revolution a large number of educational societies were formed, and adult schools and study courses, libraries, people's universities, etc., were opened. During the period of reaction, however, the tsarist government suppressed most of these educational societies and institutions. The first to suffer were the educational societies which had been formed by the workers and the non-Russian nationalities. Among these were the Knowledge Is Strength Society, The Educational Society, The Self-Educational Society, The Voluntary High School, which had been organized by P. F. Lesgaft, a number of educational study courses, nearly all the People's universities, and many of the elementary educational societies. But the tsarist government was unable to crush the people's desire for knowledge.

The needs of developing capitalism, the growing economic and political intercourse with the more cultured European countries, and lastly, the steps which the tsarist government itself was taking towards a bourgeois monarchy, compelled the government to increase the extremely insignificant funds hitherto allocated for education in Russia.

The industrial boom of 1912-1914 confronted the bourgeoisie with the need for training technical personnel which were practically non-existent in tsarist Russia. The number of students in technical colleges in 1914 was twice that in 1903.

With funds provided by the Zemstvo and private capitalists,

technical and commercial schools, and trade and agricultural schools were opened.

During the six years from 1907 to 1913 the estimates of the Ministry of Education were trebled, from 46,000,000 rubles to 137,000,000 rubles; but the latter was an insignificant sum considering the real needs of a civilized country. The tsarist government spent on education 65 kopeks per head per annum, whereas Great Britain, France and Germany spent three to four rubles, and the United States nine rubles per head per annum. On the eve of the war the number of pupils attending educational establishments of all types was about 7,000,000, which was less than 50 per 1,000 of the population. Only about one-fourth of the children of school age attended school. According to official figures, before the revolution of 1917, only 21 per cent of the population of Russia was literate. In the non-Russian national regions the percentage of literacy was even lower: in Transcaucasia 12 per cent, in Central Asia about 5 per cent. Of Uzbek, Turkmen and Tadjik children only 42 per 1,000 attended school. This explains why entire nationalities, such as the Bashkirs, Kirghiz, Turkmens, Yakuts and many others were totally illiterate. As Lenin wrote: "No such barbarous country in which the masses of the people have been so completely *robbed* of education, light and knowledge has remained in Europe except Russia" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVI, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 410).

Lenin pointed to the conditions of schoolteachers as an index of the backwardness and barbarism of tsarist Russia. Teachers' salaries were miserably low, they were continuously subjected to the carping criticism and persécution of the higher officials, and were constantly harassed by the police and secret service agents.

The tsarist school, "the school of drilling and learning by rote" as Lenin called it, dinned into the minds of the children knowledge of which nine-tenths was useless, while the other tenth was distorted. High-school students were prohibited from forming self-educational circles.

After defeating the revolution of 1905, the tsarist government came down heavily on the universities. In 1910 and 1911, in connection with the death of Leo Tolstoy, the students resumed their political meetings and protest demonstrations. In retaliation to this the tsarist government issued an order abolishing university autonomy which had been won by the 1905 revolution, and suppressing student organizations which hitherto had been permitted to exist. Large numbers of students were expelled from the universities and deported for taking part in the students' movement. In 1910 the newly appointed Minister of Education, the reactionary Kasso, dismissed all the liberal and radical professors and he also discharged the Principal of the Moscow Uni-

versity and his assistants for failing to take adequate measures against the "mutinous" students. In protest against this act of bureaucratic tyranny 125 professors and lecturers of the Moscow University, among whom were K. A. Timiryazev, Professor of Physics P. N. Lebedev, and others, resigned.

To combat the revolutionary student movement the government encouraged the formation in the higher educational establishments of Black Hundred student organizations, such as the Academic Union, and others, which were connected with the Union of Russian People.

The state of the universities to some extent determined the state of science in Russia. The university chairs trained an inadequate number of scientific research workers and there were few scientific research institutes in tsarist Russia. The Imperial Academy of Sciences produced no works of any great scientific value, and the President of the Academy was the tsar's uncle Konstantin Romanov, who knew nothing about science.

The genuine scientists who sprang from the ranks of the people received neither recognition nor assistance. The great genetics selectionist, I. V. Michurin, was not recognized as a scientific researcher, in spite of the fact that scientists from other countries came to him to study his methods. The same applied to another great scientist, K. E. Tsiolkovsky, who constructed a dirigible airship ten years before the Zeppelin appeared, and who formulated the principles of the jet-propelled engine; he was obliged to remain a teacher of mathematics in Kaluga and conduct his scientific researches with his own very modest resources. The outstanding mechanic, the father of Russian aviation, N. E. Zhukovsky, devoted himself to the study of aerial dynamics and the theory of the flight of aircraft, but the results of his work found application only under the Soviet regime. The first Russian airmen, Rossinsky, Utochkin and others, performed their flights at the risk of their lives in badly constructed aeroplanes provided by professional showmen for the purpose of public entertainment.

The plan proposed by the Arctic explorer, G. Y. Sedov in 1912, for an expedition to the North Pole was met with hostility and ridicule. It was only with great difficulty that Sedov, with the aid of private contributions, fitted out the *St. Phoca* and started out on his expedition, which was inadequately organized. Eventually, the ship was caught in the ice and Sedov, accompanied by two sailors, abandoned the ship and attempted to reach the Pole on foot, but they only succeeded in reaching Rudolf Island, where, in the winter of 1914, the brave explorer died of hunger and cold. The remains of Sedov's grave on Rudolf Island were only recently discovered.

Thus, scientific discoveries, research and expeditions were treated

by the tsarist government and the bourgeoisie with cold indifference, and sometimes even with ignorant contempt.

**Literature and Art.** The ideological disintegration that set in among the bourgeois intelligentsia found most vivid reflection in the decadence that characterized the literary world in the last decade before the revolution.

The Cadet professors and philosophers, such as Bulgakov, Berdyaev and others, intensified, in their philosophical works, their attacks on Marxism and revolution and preached idealism and mysticism. Reactionary idealistic philosophy exercised considerable influence upon the Russian petty-bourgeois intelligentsia who frequently sought escape from reality in the world of abstract ideas and emotions.

The individualist intellectual, disillusioned with life, became the principal hero in fiction.

Social reaction opened the way for numerous literary trends such as the symbolists, futurists, acme-ists, etc., and while these various groups, schools and coteries were at loggerheads with each other, they all agreed in repudiating realism in art. The predominating principle in literature was formalistic searching. The literature and poetry of that time was distinguished for its intellectual shallowness and pessimistic moods. Thus, the works of Leonid Andreyev breathed profound pessimism and fatalism. Life for him was "madness and horror" and man was "a plaything in the hands of fate." Artsybashev argued that a man "could do anything he pleased since Death stood at everyone's back." Merezhkovsky and Zinaida Hippus advocated "seeking for a God" and denounced the Russian revolution. Undoubtedly talented poets like Balmont, Theodore Sologub and others, withdrew from public life and sank into extreme individualism, or into the world of abstract fantasy, "from constricting borders into a wonderful world, to unknown beauty" as Balmont wrote. Pessimism even affected the work of progressive poets like Alexander Blok and Valeri Bryusov.

The Bolsheviks combated this state of decay in the literary world. Amidst the gloom of that period the wonderful stories that were written by the great proletarian author Maxim Gorky breathed cheerful confidence and strength. "Man—there is a proud ring about that word," said Gorky. He had confidence in the new man and in his lofty mission as fighter for and builder of the new way of life. At that time Gorky came out as the bard of socialist democracy. In his novel *Mother*, he put into the mouth of his hero the following words about the new generation of Russian workers: "When you look at them you can see that Russia will be the brightest democracy on earth."

Maxim Gorky became the favourite author of the proletariat, and from his works the proletarians imbibed new strength for the struggle. Lenin wrote that "Gorky is undoubtedly the greatest repre-

sentative of *proletarian* art, who has done a great deal for this art and is capable of doing still more in the future" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV, Moscow, 1934, p. 36).

Another challenge to the old decaying world was the poetry of the young poet Vladimir Mayakovsky. His poem "Cloud in Pants," written in 1914, was a hymn to life, love and the struggle. Mayakovsky proclaimed himself the "drummer boy of the revolution" and welcomed its coming.

The call for the struggle for the new way of life was also sounded in the works of the Ukrainian authoress Lesya Ukrainka, whose art reached its peak in the darkest years of reaction. The writer's fate was a tragic one: she was bedridden with tuberculosis in a severe form, but her work, which was strongly influenced by Pushkin's poetry, breathed ardent sympathy for the people who were rising against the autocracy, and sounded a call for the struggle against the oppressors.

In 1913, untimely death carried away another great artist in the field of literature in the person of M. M. Kotsyubinsky. Kotsyubinsky commenced his literary career in the 1880's and 1890's by ruthlessly denouncing the liberal Narodnik intelligentsia and the monstrosities of peasant life. In the period of the 1905 revolution he definitely became the mouthpiece of revolutionary peasant democracy. In his most important work, *Fata Morgana*, he describes with profound sympathy the revolt of the peasants and reveals his hatred for the landlords and the kulaks.

In 1916, the most popular of Jewish authors, Sholem Alechem, the *nom de plume* of Sholem Rabinovich, died. Maxim Gorky described him as an "artist in melancholy and grave humour." In his series of humorous tales: *Tobias the Milkman*, *The Memoirs of a Commercial Traveller*, and others, he described with great artistic realism and sincere sympathy the joyless life of the Jewish poor.

Art in this period reflected the same ideas and moods as were reflected in literature. In painting, decorative themes came to the forefront (the "World of Art" group represented by Roerich, Benois and others). The same tendency to escape from realism into the world of inner emotions and external formalistic searchings was reflected in sculpture (P. P. Trubetskoy, Kononkov, and others).

The work of the outstanding composer A. N. Scriabin (1871-1915) an innovator of musical form, contained elements of mysticism and symbolism ("A Divine Poem," and others).



*Chapter VI***THE FEBRUARY BOURGEOIS-DEMOCRATIC  
REVOLUTION****25. THE OVERTHROW OF TSARISM**

**Two Conspiracies.** The last years of tsarism in Russia were the years of its utter decay and decomposition. During the period of the war, the rascal Gregory Rasputin, formerly a peasant from Siberia, gained exceptional influence at the tsar's court. In his youth Rasputin had been a horse thief and later he roamed from monastery to monastery with pilgrims and alms-beggars. Skilfully posing as a "seer," he became extremely popular among ignorant religious people and particularly among women. Rumours about him and the "miracles" he performed reached the tsar's court. The tsar and the tsarina who were extremely superstitious believed these rumours. The tsarina, who was fanatically religious, invited Rasputin to the court in the hope that he would be able to cure the Crown Prince Alexei of the illness which the physicians had pronounced incurable. Rasputin was shrewd and brazen and gained enormous influence over the tsarina, and through her, over the tsar. The tsarina constantly induced Nicholas II to follow the advice of Rasputin, to whom, she believed, "God reveals everything." In obedience to Rasputin's illiterate messages the tsar appointed and dismissed ministers. With his assistance shady businessmen, profiteers, swindlers and foreign spies obtained important posts, profitable concessions, enormous subsidies and lucrative war contracts. The ascendancy of Rasputin most vividly reflected the obscurantism, the superstition, the intellectual poverty and moral decay of the tsarist regime.

The defeats sustained at the front and the revolutionary situation in the country created panic in governmental circles. To have their hands free to crush the growing revolution, the tsar and the court clique wanted to conclude a separate peace with Germany, and arrangements for negotiations for such a peace were made by the tsarina through her German relatives. The scheme to conclude a separate peace with Germany was also supported by Rasputin.

Rumours that the court was secretly preparing to conclude a separate peace with Germany leaked out and this, together with the fact that tsarism was obviously incapable of coping with the revolutionary movement in the country, stimulated the opposition of the bourgeoisie. At the end of 1915, the government began to meet with increasingly vigorous and sharp criticism in the State Duma. True, as Shulgin, one of the Deputies of the Right explained, this criticism was merely an

attempt to transform "the seething revolutionary energy into words" and to "substitute resolutions for revolution." Nevertheless, bourgeois circles had lost their former "confidence" in the government. The government became panic-stricken and began to indulge in what was called "Ministerial leapfrog," *i. e.*, constantly dismissing ministers and replacing them by others. During the period of the war there were no less than four Presidents of the Council of Ministers, six Ministers of the Interior, four Ministers of War, three Ministers of Foreign Affairs, four Ministers of Agriculture and four Ministers of Justice. As was said in the Duma, the changes were so fast that it was impossible to "get a good look at the faces of the Ministers who fell."

In November 1916, the Fourth State Duma reassembled after the summer recess in an atmosphere of extreme political tension. The revolutionary crisis in the country was growing with catastrophic speed. The time had come when the ruling classes could no longer govern in the old way and the working people would no longer live in the old way. In its report on the political situation in the country, the Department of Police was obliged to admit that "opposition temper has now reached such exceptional dimensions that it far exceeds that which prevailed among the broad masses in the turbulent period of 1905-1906."

Even the Grand Dukes and the higher aristocracy sensed the impending collapse of tsarism and demanded the removal of Rasputin, whom they regarded as the chief cause of all the trouble in the country. On the night of December 17, 1916, Rasputin was killed by conspirators, among whom were relatives of the tsar, and his body was thrown into an ice hole on the river Neva. The assassination of Rasputin, however, could not, of course, alter the situation in the country. The tsarist government resolved to take drastic measures to crush the revolutionary masses. Its plan was to conclude a separate peace with Germany, dissolve the Duma, and then concentrate its main blow against the working class. It intended to draw troops, including artillery, to the capital and to do so in good time. The war factories were to be militarized in order to place the workers under military law. The Petrograd Military Area, which came within the area of the Northern Front, was formed into a separate military area under the command of General Khabalov, a most reactionary general. The police force in the capital was put on a war footing and supplied with machine guns. Maklakov, formerly Minister of the Interior, wrote to the tsar demanding that the sternest measures be taken to combat the revolutionary movement in order "to restore order in the state at all costs and ensure victory over the internal enemy who has long been becoming more dangerous, more fierce and more insolent than the external enemy."

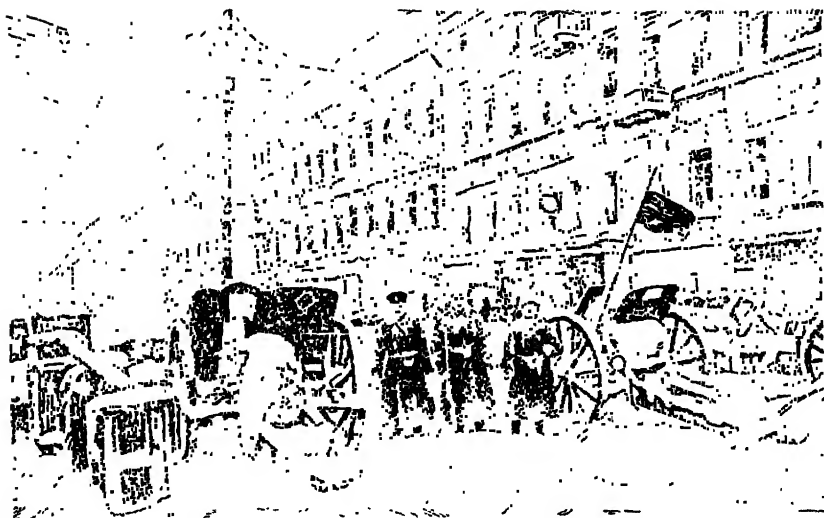
Concurrently with this plot, another plot was being hatched by the imperialist bourgeoisie and the militarists. Giving up all hope of reaching an agreement with tsarism, the bourgeois plotters decided that the best means of averting a revolution would be a palace revolution. They plotted to capture the tsar's train while it was on the way from Army General Headquarters in Mogilev to Tsarskoye Selo, compel the tsar to abdicate in favour of his son Alexei and appoint the tsar's brother, Michael Romanov, who sympathized with "English ways," regent until Alexei came of age. A part in this plot to bring about a palace revolution was played by the British and French imperialists who were afraid that the autocracy would conclude a separate peace with Germany.

But neither the plot of the tsarist autocracy nor that of the bourgeoisie fructified. They could not avert revolution. The working class and the peasants' soldiers' uniforms thwarted these plans by their mass revolutionary actions.

**The Insurrection in Petrograd.** At the beginning of 1917, the general crisis in the country became extremely acute. The railways almost ceased to function. The factories and mills failed to receive raw materials and fuel and came to a standstill. The food problem grew into an acute political problem. On January 9, 1917, the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, a huge anti-war demonstration took place in Petrograd. Similar demonstrations took place in Moscow, Baku, Nizhni Novgorod and other towns. In Moscow two thousand workers came into the streets carrying red flags and banners bearing the slogan "Down with the war!" Mounted police dispersed the demonstrators. In a number of towns strikes broke out, and in some, the people spontaneously began to raid the baker shops. The government lost its head and began to intensify its measures of repression. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to prevent the revolution from developing by calling upon the workers to organize a demonstration in defence of the State Duma; but on February 14, the day on which the Duma was to open, a large section of the workers, in response to the call of the Bolsheviks, came into the streets, carrying the slogans "Down with the autocracy!", "Down with the war!"

In the latter half of February the revolutionary movement in Petrograd grew with exceptional rapidity. On February 18, 30,000 workers employed at the Putilov Works came out on strike.

In the morning of February 23 the Putilov workers came out in a demonstration and were joined by the workers of other plants and by women waiting in the queues outside the baker shops. The Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party had issued an appeal for February 23 (March 8 new style)—International Workingwomen's Day—to be marked by a



Barricades on the Liteiny Prospekt, Petrograd, February 1917

political strike. In all, 90,000 men and women workers struck work that day. The political strike began to develop into a general political demonstration against tsarism.

Next day, February 24, 200,000 workers were on strike. Revolutionary meetings were held in all parts of the city. The police occupied the bridges across the Neva, but the workers streamed towards the centre of the city over the ice. On February 25, the political strikes in the different districts of Petrograd developed into a general political strike of the workers of the whole city. From General Headquarters the tsar sent the officer commanding the Petrograd Military Area the following order: "I command you to put a stop to the disorders in the capital not later than tomorrow." The police began to fire upon the demonstrators with machine guns that were posted on the roofs of houses. The streets and squares in the centre of the city were occupied by troops. Large numbers of workers and Bolsheviks were arrested and flung into prison, among them members of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party. The revolt at that time was directed by the Bureau of the Central Committee headed by Comrade Molotov.

V. M. Molotov had returned to Petrograd in 1916, after escaping from the Irkutsk Gubernia, where he had been exiled in 1915. On Lenin's instructions he was appointed to the Russian Bureau of the

Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which was directing the preparations for the February revolution. It was he who edited the leaflet issued by the Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party on February 25, the last before the revolution—openly calling for insurrection. This leaflet ended with the words: "Ahead of us lies struggle, but victory awaits us. Let everybody rally under the Red flags of the revolution! Down with the tsarist monarchy!"

On February 26, the Vyborg Side of Petrograd was entirely in the hands of the insurgent workers. The Vyborg District Committee of the Bolshevik Party called upon the workers to arm themselves by seizing the arsenals and disarming the police. Meanwhile the workers intensified their propaganda activities among the troops; they forced their way into the barracks and called upon the soldiers to join them. In the morning of February 26, some military units were still firing at the people, but by noon the soldiers were firing not at the people, but at the mounted police who were attacking the workers. An important part in winning the soldiers over to the side of the people was played by the workingwomen who ardently pleaded with the soldiers to help the workers to overthrow the hated autocracy.

On February 27, the troops in Petrograd began to go over to the side of the insurgents. The men of the Volhynsky and Lithuanian Regiments joined the workers in the Vyborg District. The workers captured an arsenal containing 40,000 rifles and armed themselves. Political prisoners were liberated from the prisons.

General Khabalov proclaimed martial law in Petrograd, but the tsarist authorities were no longer capable of checking the revolution. The insurgent workers marched to the Taurida Palace, where the State Duma met. During these days Rodzyanko, the President of the State Duma, had been sending the tsar at General Headquarters in Mogilev telegram after telegram begging him to make concessions to the people and thus "save the country and the dynasty"; but the tsar regarded the Duma as the principal hotbed of the revolution and therefore, on February 26, had issued a decree dissolving the Duma. The members of the Duma submitted to the tsar's decree, but they remained in the Taurida Palace.

The tsar at General Headquarters continued to receive reassuring telegrams from the tsarina who was in the capital. "It is a hooligan movement," the tsarina wrote, "young boys and girls are running about and screaming that they have no bread—only to excite. . . ." The tsar ordered troops to be withdrawn from the front and sent to Petrograd, but a troop train under the command of General Ivanov scarcely managed to reach Tsarskoye Selo, near Petrograd, where the soldiers fraternized with the revolutionary soldiers and wanted to arrest the General. The tsar left General Headquarters for Petrograd, but the royal train barely reached Dno, where it was

obliged to turn and make for Pskov, the Headquarters of the Northern Front.

Everywhere the troops went over to the side of the revolution.

## 26. THE DUAL POWER

**The Formation of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.** On February 27 (March 12 new style), the revolution triumphed.

Armed workers and soldiers liberated political prisoners from the prisons. The victorious workers and soldiers marched to the Taurida Palace where the members of the dissolved Duma were gathered. Hardly had the fighting ended than Comrade Molotov, member of the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, arrived at the palace.

The idea of Soviets lived on in the minds of the people ever since the days of the 1905 revolution, and they put this idea into effect immediately on the overthrow of tsarism. Even while fighting was still in progress in the streets the workers in the factories and mills were already electing their first Deputies to the Soviets. Comrade Molotov sent Bolshevik soldiers to the various regiments of the Petrograd garrison with instructions to organize the election of Deputies to the Soviet from each military unit.

Thus, unlike what occurred in 1905, when only Soviets of Workers' Deputies were formed, in February 1917, a joint Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was formed. The first meeting of the Petrograd Soviet took place in the evening of February 27.

The Petrograd Soviet and its Executive Committee proved to be under the control of representatives of the compromising parties—the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—who managed to secure election while the Bolsheviks were in the streets leading the workers' insurrection. Another factor that influenced the elections was that most of the leaders of the Bolshevik Party were still in prison or in exile. Tsarism had torn the leaders of the Bolshevik Party out of the ranks of the working class: Lenin was a political emigrant abroad, Stalin was in exile in distant Siberia. The Mensheviks, however, had remained at large, and posing as the champions of freedom they deceived the workers and soldiers and got themselves elected to the Soviets as their representatives. The rate of representation also helped the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries to obtain a majority in the Soviets; the rate of representation for large plants was one Deputy per 1,000 workers, but plants employing less than 1,000 workers could also elect one Deputy. The result was that the big plants, where Bolshevik influence was strongest, received only as many seats in the Soviet as the small plants in which Menshevik influence predominated. The

army units, which consisted largely of peasants, elected mainly Socialist-Revolutionaries or their sympathizers to the Soviet.

**The Provisional Committee of the State Duma.** On February 27, after backstairs negotiations between the bourgeois members of the Duma and the leaders of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties, a Provisional Committee of the State Duma was set up, headed by the President of the Fourth Duma, Rodzyanko. The latter entered into communication with General Headquarters with the view to obtaining the consent of Nicholas II to the formation of a Cabinet that would be responsible to the Duma. The bourgeoisie were still trying to save the monarchy. As Comrade Stalin wrote in appraising the stand that was taken by the bourgeoisie at the time of the February revolution, they "wanted a little revolution for a big war." The first thing the Provisional Committee of the State Duma did was to issue an order to the troops to return to barracks immediately and obey their officers. At a meeting of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies the soldiers' representatives raised a protest against this order. Yielding to the pressure from the masses of soldiers the Soviet issued Order No. 1, which defined the rights of the revolutionary soldiers. It provided for the election of Soldiers' Committees in all units of the Petrograd garrison, abolished the rule of addressing officers and generals as "Your Honour," "Your Excellency," etc., prohibited officers from using the degrading form, "thou," in addressing soldiers, and granted the latter the same political and civil rights as those enjoyed by officers.

Order No. 1 was an important factor in organizing the revolutionary forces of the army and in finally swinging the soldiers at the front to the side of the revolution.

**The Revolution Victorious Throughout the Country.** Following on the successful revolution in Petrograd, the revolution swept in triumph over the whole country. On February 27, the Moscow organization of the Bolshevik Party called upon the workers and soldiers in that city to support the revolution in Petrograd. In the morning of February 28, the workers of the biggest plants came out on strike and were joined by the soldiers of the Moscow garrison. In the evening of March 1, the workers liberated imprisoned Bolsheviks. Among these was F. E. Dzerzhinsky.

The victory of the revolution in Petrograd was the signal for a revolt against tsarism also in the city of Nizhni Novgorod. The workers of the Sormovo and other plants started a general strike, liberated political prisoners, disarmed the police and marched to the barracks and fraternized with the soldiers.

On March 2, the workers employed at the small-arms and ammunition factories in Tula rose in revolt, set up Soviets and arrested the local tsarist authorities.

Similar scenes occurred in February and March all over Russia. As Lenin figuratively expressed it, the blood-and mud-stained cart of the Romanov monarchy was overturned at one stroke.

**The Provisional Government.** The revolution was brought about by the workers and the peasants in soldier's uniform, but they were robbed of the fruits of their victory. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were of the opinion that the revolution was already over and that the main thing now was to set up a "normal" bourgeois government. On the night of March 1, behind the backs of the Bolsheviks, they reached an agreement with the members of the Duma to form such a government. In the morning of March 2, the appointment of a Provisional Government headed by Prince Lvov, a big landlord, was announced. Among the members of this government was Milyukov, leader of the Cadet Party, professor of history, who was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs; Guchkov, leader of the Octobrist Party, a manufacturer and banker, head of the War Industry Committees, who was appointed Minister of War and Marine; Konovalov, member of the Progressive Party and textile mill owner, was appointed Minister of Commerce and Industry; and the millionaire sugar manufacturer Tereshchenko was appointed Minister of Finance. Of the eleven Ministers only one was a "Socialist," the People's Socialist (later Socialist-Revolutionary) Kerensky, a lawyer, who received the minor post of Minister of Justice.

In his first "Letter from Afar," Lenin described this government in the following words: "This government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons. They are representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of capitalist landlords and bourgeoisie, the class that for a long time *has been ruling* our country economically. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. I, Moscow, 1947, p. 739.)

The first steps the new bourgeois government took were directed towards saving the monarchy. Behind the back of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, Guchkov and Shulgin went to the deposed tsar in Pskov, and in the name of the Provisional Government urged him to abdicate in favour of his son Alexei. The tsar consented to abdicate in favour of his brother Michael. The bourgeoisie were willing to accept even this new tsar. On his return to Petrograd Guchkov addressed a meeting of the workers in the railway workshops and after reading the manifesto announcing the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II he concluded with the cry: "Long live Emperor Michael!" The indignant workers demanded Guchkov's immediate arrest. "Horse-radish is no sweeter than radish," they said.

Realizing that it was impossible to save the monarchy, the Provisional Government sent a deputation to Michael Romanov to request him to abdicate and transfer power to itself. On March 3, Michael



Romanov signed his abdication, and in a manifesto to the people he called upon them to obey the Provisional Government.

**The Class Nature of the Dual Power.** At the very outset of the revolution a dual power arose in the country: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, represented by the Provisional Government; and the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, represented by the Soviets of Deputies. Both these powers existed side by side.

After victory was achieved over tsarism Soviets of Workers' Deputies were set up in all the towns of Russia, even in the most remote parts of the country. Somewhat later, in the latter half of March, Soviets of Peasants' Deputies began to spring up. At first, the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies served as the all-Russian centre of the Soviets. The Soviets were virtually a second government. They controlled the armed forces of the revolution. Armed workers formed units of Red Guards. The Soviets enjoyed the undivided confidence and support of the army and of the masses of the working people. Nevertheless, the Soviets voluntarily surrendered all state power to the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government.

Lenin wrote the following: "The class origin and the class significance of this dual power consist in the fact that the Russian revolution of March 1917 not only swept away the whole tsarist monarchy, not only transferred the entire power to the bourgeoisie, but also *approached very closely* to the point of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. The Petrograd and the other, the local, Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies represent precisely such a dictatorship (that is, a government power resting not on law but on the direct force of armed masses of the population), a dictatorship precisely of the above-mentioned classes" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, pp. 27-28).

The existence of a dual power in 1917 was due to the fact that Russia was a petty-bourgeois country. During the revolution, millions of people who had had no previous experience in politics were awakened to political life, and this petty-bourgeois tide swept to the political forefront the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties which entered into a compromise with the bourgeoisie.

As a class, the bourgeoisie was better organized than the workers and peasants, who had not had the same legal opportunities to organize as the bourgeoisie had enjoyed. After 1905, and particularly during the war, the capitalist class was able to build up for itself the machinery of its future power, and it easily set this machinery in motion at the time of the revolution.

During the war the petty-bourgeois stratum of the proletariat also gained in strength as a consequence of the fact that numerous small

property owners, handicraftsmen, shopkeepers and kulaks had poured into the factories in order to escape military service. It was this petty-bourgeois stratum of the workers, together with the small "labour aristocracy," that served as the main prop of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The politically mature and most class-conscious section of the proletariat belonged to the Bolshevik Party; but during the war most of these were either in prison, in exile, or at the front.

The vast masses of the workers, soldiers and peasants, formerly downtrodden by tsarism, betrayed naive confidence in the Provisional Government, which, they believed, had been created by the revolution, and in the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, who were the worst enemies of peace and Socialism.

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# THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

## *Chapter VII*

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

#### 27. THE BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

**The Imperialist Policy of the Provisional Government.** The masses of the working people expected that the government which came into power as a result of the revolution would put a stop to the war, transfer the land to the peasants, introduce an 8-hour day for the workers and take measures to combat hunger and economic chaos. But, as Lenin wrote, the Provisional Government could "give to the peoples of Russia (or to those nations to which we are bound by the war) neither peace, nor bread, nor complete freedom. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Bk. I, New York, 1929, p. 24.)

The Provisional Government, which consisted of representatives of the landlords and capitalists whose interests were bound up with the war, had no intention of terminating the war. On the contrary, it tried to utilize the revolution for the purpose of stimulating military operations and of giving effect to the plans of the imperialists.

Russia's British and French allies also demanded that the Provisional Government prosecute the war "to a victorious finish." The British government recognized the Provisional Government on the condition that it "remained faithful to the obligations undertaken by its predecessors." The French government sent the Provisional Government a note wishing it success in its determination to prosecute the war "honestly and tirelessly to a victorious finish," but made no mention of official recognition.

With the assistance of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Provisional Government deceived the masses by assuring them that after the overthrow of tsarism the war had ceased to be an imperialist war and was now a war for a free and democratic

Russia. The bourgeois, landlord, Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary newspapers proclaimed in different keys that "without victory at the front there can be no freedom."

The workers, soldiers and peasants, however, persistently demanded the termination of the hated war, and as a result of their pressure the Petrograd Soviet on March 14 issued an appeal to the peoples of Europe calling for a "just democratic peace without annexations or indemnities." This appeal did not, however, indicate any concrete measures for the struggle for peace; it merely fostered the illusion that an imperialist war can terminate with a "just peace" without the overthrow of the imperialist governments. But even this compromise appeal of the Soviet roused the protests of the Entente governments.

The Provisional Government hastened to assure the Allies of its readiness to prosecute the war to a victorious finish. For the purpose of continuing the war it floated a "Liberty Loan" to the amount of 6,000,000,000 rubles, and the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries supported this measure.

The bourgeois Provisional Government tried to preserve the old order after the revolution; the land remained in the possession of the landlords, and the factories in the possession of the capitalists. Protecting the interests of the employers, it refused to pass a law introducing an 8-hour day; the workers instituted the 8-hour day on their own accord. Protecting the interests of the landlords, the government, in March, sent troops to the Kursk, Mogilev and Perm Gubernias to suppress the incipient peasant movement there. In April it circulated an order to Gubernia Commissars calling upon them to crush revolutionary actions of the peasants "by all means, including the calling out of military forces." At the same time it passed a law on the protection of grain fields, which provided for the payment of compensation to landlords for damage caused by "popular unrest." The Ministry of Agriculture, of which the Cadet Shingaryov was the head, set up Conciliation Boards consisting of peasants and landlords for the purpose of settling disputes between them "by voluntary agreement." The Provisional Government introduced no reforms whatever; it postponed all reforms until the "convocation of the Constituent Assembly," which, however, it was in no hurry to convene.

The Provisional Government left intact the entire administrative machinery of the old regime. The Provincial Governors were replaced by Provincial Commissars, these posts being filled by chairmen of gubernia and county Zemstvo Administrations, most of whom were landlords and arrant monarchists. The Minister of Justice, the Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky, left all the tsarist procurators in their posts. The former tsarist ministers and high government officials continued to receive huge pensions. Neither titles (prince, count, baron,

etc.) nor tsarist decorations were abolished. The nobility continued to enjoy all their caste and property rights and privileges. The Provisional Government even tried to save the royal family by sending it to England, and it was only the determined intervention of the workers and soldiers that compelled the government to abandon this plan and arrest the tsar.

The imperialist Provisional Government neither could nor would give the people peace, land, bread and freedom; but a section of the workers and a considerable section of the soldiers and peasants still had confidence in the compromising parties—the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries—which called upon them to support the Provisional Government. Lenin called these misguided people “honest Defencists” as distinct from the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders who deliberately advocated the continuation of the imperialist war.

**Lenin's April Theses.** As a result of the victorious revolution Russia, which only recently had been the most oppressed country in the world, became a free country compared with other countries. The masses of the people made full use of the democratic rights and the freedom of speech, press, combination, demonstration and assembly which they had won.

All over the country the workers set up factory committees and formed trade unions; the peasants began to organize land committees; in conformity with Order No. 1 the soldiers democratized the army. To develop the revolution further, it was necessary to guide the activities of these broad masses who had just been awakened to political life and to help them to understand the situation that had arisen in the country. This was the task that the Bolshevik Party set itself after the victory of the February revolution.

On March 5, 1917, the first issue of the revived Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda* appeared. On March 12, Comrade Stalin returned to Petrograd from exile in Turukhansk, and on March 14, his first article on the Soviets appeared in *Pravda*. In this article Comrade Stalin urged that the Soviets should be strengthened in every way as the organs of the revolutionary power of the people. The change from underground to legal conditions caused semi-Menshevik wavering among some of the members of the Bolshevik Party. Thus, Kamenev, on his return to Petrograd, took the Menshevik stand of supporting the Provisional Government and the policy it pursued. But the Petrograd Bolsheviks, headed by Comrade Stalin, strongly combated the attempts of Kamenev and his group to divert the Party to the path of opportunism.

The entire Party eagerly awaited the return to Russia of the leader of the revolution, V. I. Lenin.

Lenin was an exile in Switzerland when he received the news of the second revolution in Russia. He wanted to return home at once, but



V. I. Lenin on the Way to Petrograd in April 1917  
*From a painting by V. Moravov*

the imperialist governments of France and Great Britain put every obstacle in his way. From this "accursed afar" as he called it, he closely watched the development of events in Russia, and in letters to comrades and articles in *Pravda* (his "Letters from Afar") indicated to the Party the fundamental tasks of the proletariat in the revolution.

It was not until April 3 (16), 1917, that Lenin succeeded, after overcoming great difficulties, in returning to Russia. At Byelo-Ostrov, near Petrograd, he was met by Comrade Stalin. Thousands and thousands of workers, soldiers and sailors assembled at the Finland Railway Station in Petrograd to welcome the beloved leader of the revolution. The station square and the adjoining streets were crammed with people and scores of Red flags bearing the inscription "Welcome to Lenin" fluttered in the light of flaming torches. On his appearance outside the station Lenin was greeted with thunderous cheers. Mounting an armoured car he delivered a brief speech of greeting which he concluded with the cry: "*Long live the Socialist Revolution!*"

In the morning of April 4, Lenin attended a meeting of Bolsheviks at which he expounded his theses entitled "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution." These were Lenin's celebrated April Theses.

In these theses Lenin emphasized that "the specific feature of the present situation in Russia is that it represents a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution—which . . . placed the power in the hands of the bourgeoisie—to the *second* stage, which must place the power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 18).

The Bolshevik Party came to the new stage with the plan for developing the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution which Lenin had worked out as far back as 1905. It launched its struggle for the new stage of the revolution on the basis of Lenin's theory that Socialism could be victorious in a single country. Formerly, Social-Democrats had regarded the parliamentary democratic republic as the best political form for the transition to Socialism; now, however, Lenin proposed that the demand for a democratic republic should be superseded by the demand for a Soviet republic. In his theses he proclaimed the slogan: "A republic of Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country, from top to bottom." As regards the Provisional Government he proclaimed the slogan: "No support for the Provisional Government."

In his theses Lenin also put forward the demand for the confiscation of the landlords' estates and the nationalization of all the land, the immediate merging of all the banks in one national bank to be

controlled by the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and the immediate institution of Soviet control over the social production and distribution of products.

Another of Lenin's proposals was that the Bolshevik Party should drop the name of Social-Democratic Party, which had been discredited and disgraced by the opportunists, traitors to Socialism, and adopt the name of Communist Party, as Marx and Engels had called the proletarian party. By adopting this name the Party emphasized that its ultimate goal was Communism.

Lenin also set the task of forming a new, Third, Communist International.

Kamenev, Rykov and the other opportunists who were opposed to the transition to the socialist revolution joined the Mensheviks in opposing Lenin's theses. The entire Party, however, unanimously adopted Lenin's theses which outlined a masterly plan of the party's struggle for the transition from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution.

Lenin's April Theses served as the basis for all the decisions that were adopted by the Seventh All-Russian Conference of the Bolshevik Party that was held in April 1917 (hence known as the April Conference). At this conference Kamenev, Rykov and Zinoviev opposed Lenin's plan for the development of the bourgeois-democratic into a socialist revolution. They repeated the Menshevik argument that Russia had not yet matured for a socialist revolution, and that only bourgeois rule could be established. The conference, however, supported Lenin's theses and denounced the enemies of Socialism.

The conference adopted a resolution demanding that the landlords' estates be confiscated and placed at the disposal of the Peasant Committees.

Comrade Stalin delivered a report on the national question in which he substantiated the Bolshevik program demands for the right of nations to self-determination, including the right to secede and



J. V. Stalin in 1917



form independent states. Pyatakov, who, with Bukharin, had taken a national-chauvinist stand during the imperialist war, opposed granting nations the right to self-determination. Following the lead of Lenin and Stalin, the conference rebuffed this attempt at the opportunist revision of the Party's program on the national question. In the speech he delivered at the conference, Lenin advanced the slogan of "All power to the Soviets." The fact that the Party put forward this slogan meant that it was setting out to abolish the dual power and to secure the transfer of all power to the Soviets. The fulfilment of this slogan would mean expelling the representatives of the landlords and capitalists from the organs of power.

The April Conference was of tremendous significance in the history of the Bolshevik Party. It headed the Party for the fight to develop the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution, for the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

**The April Crisis.** The Bolsheviks did not at this time call upon the masses immediately to overthrow the Provisional Government, in so far as it was still supported by the Soviets. They set out to win a majority in the Soviets, which were controlled by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and through the Soviets to bring about changes in the composition and the policy of the Provisional Government. The propaganda of the Bolshevik Party and experience itself soon helped the workers and soldiers to realize that the bourgeois Provisional Government was deceiving them on the most vital question, namely, the question of the war.

On April 18 (May 1 new style), when huge May Day demonstrations were taking place all over the country in support of universal peace, Milyukov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a note to the Allies in which he pledged the Provisional Government "to continue the war until a decisive victory is achieved" and promised that the Provisional Government would honour to the full the obligations undertaken towards the Allies.

When, on April 19, Milyukov's note became known to the workers and soldiers it caused profound indignation among them.

On April 20, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party called upon the working people to protest against the Provisional Government's imperialist policy. In the morning of that day the "Finland" Regiment marched to the Mariinsky Palace, where the Provisional Government was sitting, carrying the slogan: "Down with the policy of conquest!" Late in the afternoon columns of workers marched to the palace carrying banners on which were inscribed: "All power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!", "Down with the war!"

On April 20 and 21 (May 3 and 4) over 100,000 people took part in the protest demonstration against the Provi-

sional Government's imperialist policy. The bourgeoisie in their turn organized a demonstration of armed officers, cadets, university students and shopkeepers who carried the slogan: "Confidence in the Provisional Government!" General Kornilov, Commander of the Petrograd Military Area, issued an order to the troops to fire on the demonstrating working people, but the soldiers refused to obey the order of this counter-revolutionary general.

The April demonstration showed that the masses were beginning to waver in their confidence towards the Provisional Government and the compromising parties, but that it was still premature to set the task of immediately overthrowing the Provisional Government.

The April demonstration of the masses signified a crisis of the Provisional Government. When the bourgeoisie saw that they would be unable to secure complete power through the medium of the Cadet and Octobrist Ministers, they resorted to a manoeuvre: they removed from the government the ministers that were most hateful to the people and agreed to the appointment of several representatives of the compromising parties to posts in the government.

On May 2, Milyukov and Guchkov were removed from the Provisional Government. The reorganized government consisted of representatives of the bourgeoisie and a number of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Thus, V. M. Chernov, the head of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, became Minister of Agriculture, the Menshevik Tsereteli became Minister of Post and Telegraph, the Menshevik Skobelev became Minister of Labour. That was how the first coalition Provisional Government was made up. The entry of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries into the coalition government signified the open desertion of the compromising parties to the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

As Lenin wrote: "The bourgeoisie has begun to use them [the compromisers] as its cat's paw; it has started doing such things *through them* as it could never have done without them" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, Bk. 2, New York, 1929, p. 230).

The policy of the coalition government differed in no way from that of the Milyukov and Guchkov government. The "Socialist" Ministers acted in conformity with the instructions of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The Socialist-Revolutionary Kerensky, who took Guchkov's place as Minister of War, on the demand of the Entente began to prepare for an offensive. The Socialist-Revolutionary Chernov, the Minister of Agriculture, ordered stronger measures to be taken to combat the seizure of the landlords' land by the peasants. The Menshevik Minister of Labour, Skobelev, while helping the capitalists, called upon the workers to display "self-denial" and complained that their "wages were too high." The People's Socialist Peshekhonov,

Minister of Food, in every way protected the landlords and kulaks, who were profiteering in grain, and dared not put into effect the law introducing a state grain monopoly which had been passed in March. Casting off all restraint, the landlords and the kulaks even sabotaged the census of grain stocks in the country which had been ordered. Profiteering in grain assumed vast proportions.

## 28. THE JUNE CRISIS

**The June Demonstration.** The policy directed against the interests of the people that was pursued by the coalition government showed that the petty-bourgeois Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties had become the most important social prop of imperialism in Russia. Hence, the exposure and isolation of these compromisers became the fundamental aim in the activities of the Bolsheviks.

As Comrade Stalin wrote: "Naturally, the Bolsheviks at that time directed their main blows at these parties, for unless these parties were isolated, there could be no hope of a *rupture* between the labouring masses and imperialism, and unless this rupture was ensured, there could be no hope of the Soviet revolution achieving victory" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 112-113).

In pursuance of the decisions of the April Conference, the Bolshevik Party launched an extensive campaign to explain the Bolshevik slogans and to expose the policy of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The effect of this was that the workers began to carry through new elections of the Soviets, out of which they swept the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary Deputies, replacing them by Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks also ousted the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries from posts in the trade union organizations, particularly in the factory committees. On May 30 (June 12), the first conference of factory committees was held in Petrograd at which three-fourths of the delegates voted for the Bolsheviks.

Indicative of the growth of Bolshevik influence among the masses were the letters to Lenin and to *Pravda* that were sent from villages, factories and the trenches. "Comrade, friend Lenin," wrote the soldiers to Lenin, "remember that we soldiers are prepared to a man to follow you anywhere, and that your ideas truly express the will of the peasants and workers." The growth of political consciousness among the workers and soldiers was exceptionally rapid in Petrograd.

In the provinces the liberation of the masses from the influence of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries was slower. This is shown by the fact that of the 1,000 delegates who assembled at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets that was held in June 1917, only 105 were Bolsheviks. But even though

in the minority, the Bolsheviks were successful in exposing the compromising policy of the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries.

The main item on the agenda of this congress was the question of the attitude to be taken towards the coalition Provisional Government. The Menshevik Tsereteli tried to scare the congress by stating that the revolution would be doomed if the coalition with the bourgeoisie were abandoned. "There is no political party in Russia at the present time," he said, "that would express its readiness to take entire power upon itself." Lenin at once shouted from his seat: "There is such a party!" And then, mounting the platform, he said: "I say there is! . . . Our party does not refuse it; it is prepared at any moment to take over entire power" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, pp. 59-60).

Lenin strongly denounced the compromising policy that was pursued by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were helping to prolong the war and assisting the bourgeoisie in every way, and he concluded his speech with the demand that all power be transferred to the Soviets.

While the congress was in session the Bolsheviks were making preparations for a demonstration of Petrograd workers and soldiers under the slogans of "All power to the Soviets!", "Down with the ten capitalist Ministers!", "Bread, peace and freedom!" Dreading the growing influence of the Bolsheviks, the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders of the congress secured the passage of a resolution prohibiting all demonstrations for three days. At the same time the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet called for a general demonstration on June 18, with the intention of making its watchword "Confidence in the Provisional Government!" The compromisers anticipated that this would be a patriotic demonstration to mark the launching of the offensive at the front. The Bolsheviks called upon the workers and soldiers to join in this demonstration,



V. M. Molotov in 1917

but to inscribe Bolshevik slogans on their banners. Over four hundred thousand workers took part in the demonstration.

Comrade Stalin described this demonstration in *Pravda* in the following words: "A bright sunny day. An endless string of demonstrators. From morning to night the procession moves towards the Field of Mars. An endless forest of banners. . . . A feature that struck the eye: *not a single mill, not a single factory, not a single* regiment displayed the slogan 'Confidence in the Provisional Government!' Even the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries *forgot* (or rather did not dare) to display this slogan. . . . Only three groups had the courage to display the slogan of confidence, but even they found cause to regret it. These were a group of Cossacks, the 'Bund' group, and Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo* group. 'The Holy Trinity!' the workers on the Field of Mars ironically called them. Two of them (the Bund and the *Yedinstvo*) were compelled by the workers and soldiers to furl their banners amidst cries of 'Down with them!' The Cossacks refused to furl their banner, so it was torn to shreds. And one anonymous banner of 'confidence' stretched 'in mid-air' across the entrance to the Field of Mars was torn down by a group of soldiers and workers amid the approving comments of the public: 'Confidence in the Provisional Government is hanging in mid-air'" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917. Selected Writings and Speeches, Russ. ed., pp. 156-157*).

Thus, the demonstration of June 18, turned into a demonstration of no confidence in the Provisional Government. It served



Demonstration in Helsingfors in June 1917

as an index of the growing revolutionary spirit of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd, of their readiness to fight for the Bolshevik slogans. It was a defeat for the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary parties which supported the Provisional Government.

**The June Offensive.** On the demand of the British and French imperialists, the Provisional Government prepared to launch an offensive at the front. In April 1917, the United States entered the World War, but considerable time was required to transport the American troops to the theatre of war. The governments of the Entente countries wanted at all costs to keep the Russian Front active in order to prevent the Germans from transferring troops to the Western Front, and they threatened to deprive the Provisional Government of loans and subsidies if it did not immediately launch an offensive and so draw German troops away from the Western Front. In addition, the Russian bourgeoisie saw in an offensive the only way of putting a stop to the revolution. They calculated that if it failed they could throw the blame on the Soviets and the Bolsheviks and crush them.

Kerensky, the Minister of War, speeded up the preparations for the offensive. Troop trains carrying reinforcements and trains loaded with ammunition and supplies were sent to the front lines, and Kerensky himself toured the different fronts haranguing the soldiers and urging them to fight. That was why the soldiers dubbed him "Persuader-in-Chief."

The offensive was launched on June 18, and at first proceeded successfully, particularly in the case of the Eighth Army, which pierced the Austrian Front and moved its divisions into the breach. A few days later, however, the offensive petered out. Reinforcements arrived slowly, and the army command was unable to develop the first successes. The offensive came to a halt.

Shortly afterwards the Austro-German troops launched a counter-offensive, inflicted defeat on the Russian army at Tarnopol and forced it to beat a rapid retreat. During the ten days of the offensive the Russian Southwestern Front lost about 60,000 men. War weariness and discontent among the troops, their desire for peace, and their distrust of and downright enmity towards the counter-revolutionary officers were factors which contributed to the failure of the offensive.



"Into the Offensive"

*Cartoon by unknown artist*

## 29. THE NATIONAL-LIBERATION MOVEMENT OF THE OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES IN RUSSIA AFTER THE OVERTHROW OF TSARISM

**The Provisional Government's National Policy.** After it came into power the imperialist bourgeoisie pursued the same great-power policy of national oppression in the non-Russian regions as that pursued by tsarism, for it regarded the maintenance of its rule over the non-Russian regions as one of the bases of its economic and political power. Backed by the petty-bourgeois parties, the Provisional Government advanced the old tsarist slogan of "Russia, united and indivisible," but covered it with the flag of "revolutionary democracy."

The Provisional Government met with hostility every attempt at self-determination on the part of the nations, and called upon all the oppressed peoples in Russia to wait until the Constituent Assembly decided their fate. It made an exception only in the case of Poland by adopting an official decision recognizing her independence; but Poland had been occupied by German troops since 1915.

The movement for national liberation in the former tsarist colonies grew with increasing intensity in 1917.

Comrade Stalin wrote: "Abolish national oppression" was the slogan of the movement. In a trice, 'all-national' institutions sprang up all over the border regions of Russia. The movement was headed by the national, bourgeois-democratic intelligentsia. 'National Councils' in Latvia, the Estonian Region, Lithuania, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Caucasus, Kirghizstan and the Middle Volga Region; the 'Rada' in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia; the 'Sfatul Tsării' in Bessarabia; the 'Kurultai' in the Crimea and in Bashkiria; the 'Autonomous Government' in Turkestan—such were the 'all-national' institutions around which the national bourgeoisie rallied its forces" (J. Stalin, *Marrism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, p. 60).

The bourgeois nationalist intelligentsia tried to capture the leadership of the growing national movement and to take advantage of the February revolution to form "their own" national states.

The national bourgeoisie in the border regions, however, demanded not secession from Russia, but national autonomy within the Russian state, with the bourgeois government of which they hoped they could reach agreement.

**The Provisional Government's Conflict with Finland.** In the beginning of March 1917, the Provisional Government issued a decree restoring the tsarist Constitution in Finland. Shortly after that a coalition Senate was set up in that country, consisting of six Social-Democrats and six representatives of the bourgeoisie. This Senate was to act as the government. The Finnish Sejm, which had

been elected in 1916, was convened. But actually, neither the Sejm nor the Senate were given any power. The Provisional Government sent a Commissioner to Finland and refused to recognize her independence.

Finnish army officers opened negotiations with Wilhelm II with the object of obtaining his assistance in severing Finland from Russia. The Finnish bourgeoisie hoped with the assistance of the German imperialists not only to separate Finland from Russia, but also to launch a civil war against the Finnish workers. In the guise of athletic clubs they began to form reactionary "maintenance of order squads."

The Finnish proletariat were emphatically opposed to an alliance with German imperialism against Russia, where tsarism had been overthrown, and ardently supported the Russian revolution.

In the endeavour to achieve Finland's independence, the Finnish Sejm, in July, passed a law defining the supreme powers of the Sejm. In retaliation to this, the Provisional Government, following the example of the tsarist government, dissolved the Sejm.

The Bolsheviks headed by Lenin and Stalin denounced the imperialist policy of the Provisional Government and demanded recognition of Finland's right to self-determination, including secession.

**Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia after the February Revolution.** By the beginning of 1917, the greater part of Lithuania was occupied by German troops. At a conference of representatives of Lithuanian kulaks, landlords and the bourgeoisie that was held in Vilna, a Taryba, or National Council, was formed. The German authorities tried to convert the Taryba into an obedient tool of their own, and wishing to entrench themselves in Lithuania they played up to the Lithuanian bourgeoisie and promised to recognize the independence of Lithuania if she officially seceded from Russia.

A considerable part of Latvia was also occupied by German troops during the world war. Latvia was the most capitalistically-developed of the Baltic countries. The war had caused it great devastation. The Northern Front ran through Latvia; more than half the country was furrowed with trenches and affected by military operations. The crops were destroyed, and cattle breeding had declined. The commercial and economic life of the country was almost at a standstill and industry was severely damaged. On the outbreak of the war a number of the plants, and the workers employed in them, were evacuated to the interior of Russia, and after Latvia was occupied by the Germans the rest of the industrial plants were either wrecked or transported to Germany. The conditions of the masses of the working people were extremely hard during the occupation. Relying on the support of the Latvian barons, the German imperial-



ists aimed at converting Latvia into a German duchy. But even in the unoccupied part of Latvia the workers and peasants suffered a great deal from the effects of the war and from exploitation by the tsarist authorities and the local landlords and capitalists.

Consequently, the February bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia was welcomed with great rejoicing in Latvia. A movement for national liberation sprang up in the country, but the Latvian bourgeoisie, who were dependent upon the Russian market, counted on the Provisional Government granting Latvia autonomy, and therefore did not strive for the independence of that country. At the beginning of the revolution a kulak party which called itself the Peasant Union was formed, and in the middle of March 1917, this Peasant Union convened a National Assembly, which passed a resolution demanding Latvian autonomy within the Russian state. The Provisional Government, however, gave a hostile reception even to this modest demand.

The policy which the Provisional Government pursued against the interests of the people roused discontent among the masses of the Latvian working people. A conference of representatives of the Lettish Rifle Regiment passed a Bolshevik resolution condemning the Provisional Government's policy and the imperialist war. A congress of landless peasants that was held at about the same time passed a resolution demanding the confiscation of landlord and church land. The masses demanded the transfer of all power to the Soviets.

Estonia, situated near Petrograd, was the first of the Baltic countries to secure autonomy; the Provisional Government passed a law granting that country self-government in April 1917. Notwithstanding this, however, the government continued to pursue the old policy of Russification. In the summer of 1917, a National Assembly consisting of representatives of the Estonian bourgeoisie, landlords and kulaks, was convened in Revel. After securing a few political rights for the Estonian bourgeoisie this National Assembly entered into a compromise with the Provisional Government. The masses of the working people of Estonia were discontented with the compromising policy pursued by the propertied classes and began to go over to the Bolsheviks and demand the transfer of all power to the Soviets.

**The Ukrainian Central Rada and the Provisional Government.** The Provisional Government also very strongly opposed the movement for national liberation in the Ukraine. In the beginning of April 1917, the Ukrainian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist parties set up in Kiev a Ukrainian Central Rada, or Council. The largest and most influential party in the Rada was the Ukrainian Socialist-Revolutionary Party. The Rada had the support of the village kulaks. The leading members of the Rada were Grushevsky, Vinnichenko and

Petliura. In the beginning of June, the Central Rada issued an address to the Ukrainian people, proclaiming the autonomy of the Ukraine. The petty-bourgeois Central Rada did not dare to go to the length of a rupture with the Provisional Government, as it feared to remain alone, face to face with the revolutionary masses of workers and peasants; it therefore sought a compromise with the Russian bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the Provisional Government needed the support of the Ukrainian bourgeoisie during the offensive, and it therefore sent four Ministers, headed by Kerensky, to negotiate with the Rada.

The upshot of these negotiations was that in the summer of 1917, a new administrative body consisting of representatives of the Central Rada was set up in Kiev. This body was known as the General Secretariat, and its function was to co-operate with the Provisional Government's Commissioner in the Ukraine as the representative of the supreme authority. The final settlement of the political structure of the Ukraine was put off until the Constituent Assembly.

Lenin was of the opinion that the demand for Ukrainian autonomy was "very modest and very legitimate." The Bolsheviks denounced both the great-power policy pursued by the imperialist Provisional Government and the compromising policy of the Central Rada, and called upon the Ukrainian workers and peasants to fight jointly with the Russian workers and peasants against the imperialist bourgeoisie for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

**The Byelorussian Central Rada.** In the middle of March 1917, the First Congress of Byelorussian nationalist parties and organizations was held in Minsk. These bodies were united in the Byelorussian National Committee headed by the landlord Skirmunt. In June 1917, this committee convened a congress of representatives of Byelorussian bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties at which the Byelorussian Central Rada was formed. Under cover of national slogans, the nationalists tried to keep the Byelorussian workers and peasants out of the revolutionary struggle, but at the same time they expressed readiness to organize the administration of Byelorussia "in co-operation with the Provisional Government." Like the bourgeois nationalists everywhere, those in Byelorussia concluded an alliance with the bourgeoisie of the dominant, Russian nation for the purpose of combating the revolutionary movement.

The Byelorussian Bolsheviks strongly combated the Byelorussian Central Rada. An exceptionally important part in this struggle against the bourgeois nationalists was played by M. V. Frunze, who was then at the head of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants' Deputies; at the First Congress of Peasants' Deputies of the Minsk and Vilna Gubernias he exposed the counter-revolutionary nature of the Byelorussian nationalists. The Bolsheviks established closer contacts

with the front and the rural districts of Byelorussia, gained influence there and roused the Byelorussian workers, peasants and soldiers to the fight, with the slogans of the self-determination of nations and the conversion of the land into the property of the people.

**The Transcaucasian Committee and the "National Councils."** After the February revolution the leading position in Transcaucasia was held by the Georgian Mensheviks. Like the bourgeoisie and the landlords, it was their aim to preserve the bourgeois system. When they received the telegram announcing the overthrow of tsarism they kept it from the masses, but hastened to express their loyalty to the Viceroy of the Caucasus, the Grand Duke Nicholas. The old tsarist administration was allowed to remain intact. To govern Transcaucasia the Provisional Government set up a Special Transcaucasian Committee (*Ozakom*) consisting of local bourgeois nationalists and Mensheviks. The leading position in this committee was held by the Georgian Mensheviks.

The Georgian Mensheviks, the Armenian Dashnacks and the Azerbaijanian Mussavatists called upon the peasants to refrain from "unauthorized action" and wait until the land question was settled by the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. To organize their forces and to conduct a struggle for power, the Transcaucasian bourgeoisie set up National Councils, which fought against the movement for national liberation of the Caucasian people being transformed into a mass revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

The Bolsheviks were the only party to fight for the complete abolition of national oppression in Transcaucasia and to demand a complete rupture with the imperialist policy that was being pursued by the Provisional Government.

**The Provisional Government's Policy in Central Asia.** On March 2, 1917, the railwaymen in Tashkent received the news of the overthrow of the tsar and thereupon elected a Soviet of Workers' Deputies; but the tsarist Governor General Kuropatkin, who had crushed the popular movement in 1916, remained in power. At the end of March, Kuropatkin was removed on the demand of the workers and soldiers. But it was not until the middle of April that the tsarist authorities were replaced by the Turkestan Committee, a body representing the bourgeois Provisional Government.

The national movement in Central Asia was led by the reactionary Moslem clergy. The dekhans (peasants) were downtrodden and ignorant and still believed the *baï* and mullahs. In the towns, however, the Moslem workers and other poor strata set up their Soviets of Moslem Working People. In most cases these Soviets were organized by Russian workers and soldiers, and also by active participants in the insurrection of 1916 who returned home from exile.

In Khiva and Bukhara the old feudal rulers, the Khan and the

Emir, remained in power after the February revolution. The Provisional Government sent a Commissar to Khiva who acted hand in hand with the Khan. In Bukhara, the working people demanded the limitation of the power of the Emir. Fearing a popular insurrection, the representative of the Provisional Government in Bukhara advised the Emir to issue a manifesto promising reforms, but shortly afterwards the Emir, with the knowledge of the Provisional Government, arrested and executed the advocates of reform.

Thus, the peoples of Central Asia failed to achieve either social or national liberation as a result of the February revolution.

Not only that. In Turkmenia the Provisional Government continued, until it was overthrown, the punitive policy which the tsarist government had pursued against the Yomuds, who rose in revolt in 1916.

### 30. THE JULY CRISIS

**The Demonstration of July 3-5.** The war was costing the country 40,000,000 rubles per day. To cover this expenditure the government issued a huge quantity of paper currency, the value of which steadily dropped while the cost of living rose. There was a shortage of raw materials and fuel for industry and of bread for the workers. The transport system was completely dislocated. Factories and mills closed down. In May, 108 plants employing 8,700 workers, in June, 125 plants employing 38,455 workers and in July, 206 plants employing 47,754 workers were closed. Iron and steel output dropped 40 per cent and textiles 20 per cent. Unemployment grew. The strike movement spread. The workers demanded an 8-hour day and higher wages. An agrarian revolution began to sweep the country. By July, 43 out of the 69 gubernias in the country were affected by peasant unrest; the peasants seized the landlords' land and set fire to their mansions. The movement of the workers and peasants was warmly welcomed in the army. The soldiers, war weary and enraged by the continuation of the war, threatened to leave the trenches and go home. The masses of the people became more and more convinced that the Provisional Government was deceiving them. The news of the launching of the offensive and of its subsequent failure roused a storm of indignation among the workers and soldiers in Petrograd.

At the end of June the situation in Petrograd became exceptionally strained. In this situation the bourgeois parties called upon the Provisional Government to take determined measures to crush the revolutionary workers and soldiers of Petrograd. The government decided to get rid of the revolutionary garrison of Petrograd and with this object sent larger contingents of the garrison to the front on the pretext that the units there needed reinforcements. In order to exert pressure on the compromising parties and to force them to agree at last



Shooting Down of Demonstrators in Petrograd in July 1917

to the formation of a "strong government" the Cadets, on July 2, resigned from the government and thereby created a governmental crisis.

The failure of the offensive, the governmental crisis, and the provocative tactics of the bourgeois parties and organizations, filled the cup of bitterness of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd to overflowing, and on July 3 (16), individual regiments and the workers of different factories demonstrated in the streets. Soon these demonstrations grew into a general armed demonstration under the slogan of "All power to the Soviets!"

The Bolshevik Party was of the opinion that to seize power at that moment would be premature. Lenin and Stalin pointed out that the Bolsheviks could easily capture power in Petrograd but would be unable to hold it as they did not yet have a majority in the Soviets throughout the country. In spite of these warnings, however, on July 3, the First Machine-Gun Regiment came out in full fighting kit and marched to the Bolshevik headquarters. On the way other regiments, and also units of the workers' Red Guard, joined the Machine-Gun Regiment. At 11 o'clock at night the workers of the Putilov Plant came into the street. The demonstration assumed a mass character. When it became evident that this spontaneous demonstration could not be stopped the Bolsheviks decided to take the lead of it in order to keep it within peaceful and organized bounds, so as to give the bourgeoisie no opportunity for provoking the workers and soldiers to premature action with the object of crushing them.

In the morning of July 4, no less than 500,000 workers participated in the demonstration. Strikes closed the factories and mills. Ninety delegates, representing all the factories and regiments in the city, went to the Taurida Palace where the Central Executive Committee that was elected by the First Congress of Soviets was in session, and demanded that the All-Russian Central Executive Committee should proclaim the transfer of power to the Soviets.

Meanwhile, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries feverishly mustered troops for the purpose of suppressing the demonstration. Cossack units were called in from the front. In the evening of July 4, detachments of army cadets and Cossacks opened fire on the demonstrators. On July 5 demonstrators were still being fired on. After suppressing the demonstration of the workers and soldiers, the counter-revolutionaries attacked the Bolshevik Party. The editorial offices of *Pravda* were raided and wrecked and all the Bolshevik newspapers were suppressed. A detachment of cadets arrived at Lenin's lodgings with the object of arresting him and searched the premises. Foreseeing this, Comrade Stalin had opportunely arranged for Lenin's departure from Petrograd. After shaving off his beard and moustaches and disguising himself as a Finnish peasant,



Army Cadets Wreck Premises of *Pravda*,  
July 1917

Lenin safely reached Razliv Station on the Sestroretsk Railway, where for several weeks he lived in a shack on the shore of a lake, hiding from the spies of the Provisional Government.

The bourgeoisie were determined to crush the rising proletarian revolution, and with this object the authorities arrested a number of prominent Bolsheviks and wrecked the printing plant where the Party publications were printed. The Bolshevik Party became semi-illegal. The government instituted proceedings against Lenin on the charge of "high treason" and of organizing an armed insurrection.

Rykov, Kamenev and Trotsky, the masked enemies of the revolution, demanded that Lenin

should attend the court, but Stalin emphatically opposed this treacherous proposal and warned that "the cadets will not bring Lenin to the prison, they will kill him on the way." It was proved subsequently that Stalin was right: the cadets had actually received instructions to kill Lenin, ostensibly "while attempting to escape." Thus, Comrade Stalin saved the life of the great leader of the working people for the benefit of mankind.

The events of July 3-5 marked the third political crisis in the country. As in the first two crises—in April and in June—the cause of the third crisis was, as Lenin put it "... the overflowing dissatisfaction of the masses, their indignation against the bourgeoisie and its government" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 203*). The July events marked the turning point in the process of the development of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution. During the July events the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary leaders, in conjunction with the monarchist

generals, organized the shooting down of the workers' and soldiers' demonstration; and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which was controlled by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, even issued a special order authorizing the Socialist-Revolutionaries Gotz and Arvksentyev to assist General Polovtsev to "restore order."

After the July events the political situation in the country changed. The Soviets lost the confidence of the masses and became impotent. The dual power was superseded by the sole power of the bourgeoisie. Appraising the situation in the country at the time, Lenin wrote: "A peaceful development of the Russian revolution has now become impossible. History puts the question thus: either complete victory for the counter-revolution, or a new revolution" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, Bk. 1, New York, 1932, p. 58).

In view of these circumstances, it became necessary to withdraw the slogan of "All power to the Soviets!" for a time, because the Soviets, which were controlled by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, were then acting as the accomplices of counter-revolution. The party was faced with the new task of winning a majority in the Soviets and of converting the latter into organs of insurrection.

The offensive that was launched by the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie with the assistance of the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries shook the confidence of the workers and peasants in those parties. Discontent grew among the masses of the soldiers at the front. Reports to headquarters read: "The masses are sullen. Hostility towards the officers continues. The bulk of the soldiers do not want to fight. There are frequent cases of refusal to obey orders."

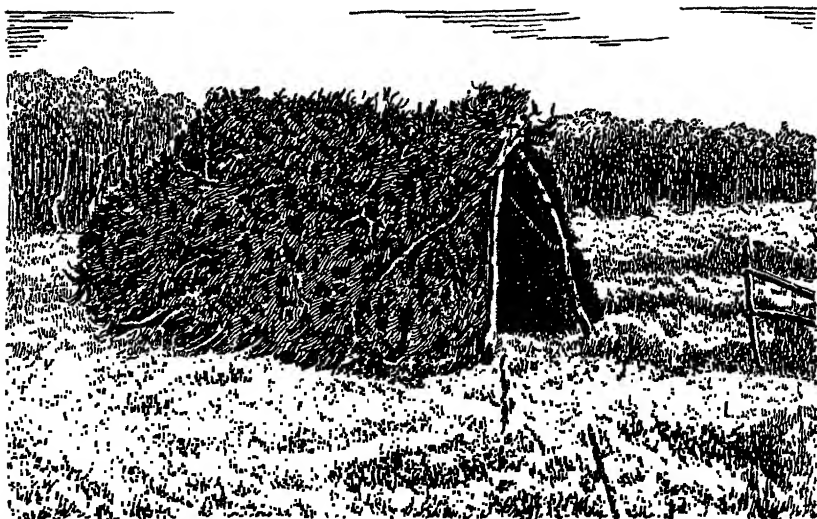
In the rural districts the peasants rose against the landlords. The "Red Chanticleer" (incendiarism) was on the rampage among the landlords' estates. Whereas in March, 34 counties had been affected by the peasant movement, in July, 325 were affected. The workers in the mills and factories went on strike and in many cases they drove out the hated directors and managers and introduced workers' control of production.

**The Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party.** On July 26, the Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party was opened in Petrograd. The congress was held in secret.

Lenin, who was in hiding, was unable to attend the congress, but Comrade Stalin kept him informed of its proceedings and received instructions from him. The congress proceedings were directed by Comrade Stalin.

Comrade Stalin delivered a report on the political situation in which he emphasized that the revolution "had begun to assume the character of a socialist workers' revolution," and that the only way to achieve the victory of the socialist revolution was to prepare for and carry out an armed insurrection.





The Shack Near Razliv Station Where Lenin Went Into Hiding

The Bukharinites and Trotskyites at the congress opposed the line for a socialist revolution. In denouncing their treacherous policy, Comrade Stalin said: "The possibility is not excluded that Russia will be the country that will lay the road to Socialism. . . . We must discard the antiquated idea that only Europe can show us the way" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, p. 197).

The congress adopted a resolution that was submitted by Comrade Stalin and endorsed the Bolshevik economic program—confiscation of the landlords' estates and nationalization of all the land, nationalization of the banks and large-scale industry, and workers' control of production and distribution. The congress also adopted a resolution on the Youth Leagues in which the latter were regarded as the reserves of the Party.

The Socialist Young Workers' League was formed in July 1917, and all its branches were directed by the Bolshevik Party. The Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party set up a special committee headed by N. K. Krupskaya to organize the young workers and to concern itself with their interests.

The Sixth Congress of the Bolshevik Party was the congress of preparation for the armed insurrection against the bourgeoisie. It headed the Party for the socialist revolution.

### 31. THE SUPPRESSION OF GENERAL KORNILOV'S COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY REVOLT

**The Bourgeois Counter-Revolutionary Plot.** After the July demonstration the bourgeoisie began to mobilize its forces for the purpose of crushing the revolution. The petty-bourgeois parties which controlled the Soviets obediently carried out the program of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

On July 8, 1917, the "Little Bonaparte," "the little braggart Kerensky," as Lenin called him, became the head of the government. Kerensky introduced the death penalty at the front, and informed the Allies that he had taken all measures to restore the fighting efficiency of the army. On the demand of the Allies, General Kornilov, who was notorious for his uncompromising hostility to the revolution, was appointed Supreme Commander-in-Chief. He issued an order prohibiting all meetings in the army. Field courts-martial introduced a reign of terror at the front. Kornilov demanded the introduction of the death penalty in the rear as well.

After Kornilov was appointed Supreme Commander-in-Chief the second coalition Provisional Government was formed. This government was headed by Kerensky and included members of the Cadet Party.

The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie set out to establish a military dictatorship and with this object organized a military monarchist plot. The instigator of this plot was the Cadet Party. As Lenin wrote at the time: "The Cadet Party is the chief political force of the bourgeois counter-revolution in Russia" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 359*). The plot was hatched at the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Kornilov, who was mustering troops for the purpose of marching them against Petrograd.

On August 12, 1917, Kerensky convened in Moscow a Council of State, which served as a sort of general review of the counter-revolutionary forces. Comrade Stalin characterized this council in the following words: "The 'way out' for the counter-revolution lies in convening a conference of merchants and manufacturers, of landlords and bankers, of members of the tsarist Duma and already tamed Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, in order, by declaring this conference to be a 'National Assembly,' to obtain from it approval for the policy of imperialism and counter-revolution, and for transferring the burdens of the war to the shoulders of the workers and peasants" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, pp. 314-15*).

The leaders of the counter-revolution intended to proclaim a military dictatorship at this council, but events developed differently from the way they anticipated.



"The Would-Be  
Napoleon"—Kerensky  
*Caricature by Moor*

On the day the council was opened in Moscow the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party called a general protest strike and 400,000 workers downed tools. The Council of State sat without electric light; the tramways did not run.

Next day, August 13, Kornilov arrived in Moscow and the bourgeoisie organized an official reception for him; but the heads of the Council of State did not dare openly to proclaim a counter-revolutionary dictatorship; the situation in Moscow was too unfavourable for this. Kornilov left for General Headquarters in Mogilev and there continued his preparations for a counter-revolutionary *coup*. His plan was to capture Petrograd with counter-revolutionary troops that were to be drawn to that city and to establish a military dictatorship in the country.

A part in this plot against the revolution was also played by the British and French imperialists. After the failure of the June offensive, the "allied" governments, who up to now had intervened in the internal affairs of Russia through the Provisional Government, now practically ignored that government and established closer direct connections with the counter-revolutionary leaders of the Russian army. The representatives of the Entente promised Kornilov a loan of 5,000,000,000 rubles as soon as a "strong government" was established in Russia.

On August 19, Kornilov treacherously surrendered Riga, thereby opening to the German troops the road to Petrograd. The surrender of Riga served as a new pretext for launching an offensive against the revolutionary masses.

Kornilov prepared for his counter-revolutionary *coup* with the knowledge and assistance of Kerensky, who ordered the revolutionary Petrograd garrison to be sent to the front in order to make it easier for the counter-revolutionaries to capture the capital. The Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary leaders actively helped Kerensky and Kornilov to prepare for their *coup*. When, however, Kornilov demanded that all military and civil power be entirely concentrated in his hands Kerensky, fearing the anger of the masses, proclaimed Kornilov a traitor to the state and issued an order for his dismissal from the post of Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Kornilov refused to obey this order and on August 25, 1917, sent the Third Cavalry Corps, under the command of General Krymov, against Petrograd.

The leaders of the compromising parties were terrified by this turn of affairs and turned to the Bolsheviks for assistance, for they were aware that the only force in the country that was capable of organizing the defeat of Kornilov was the Bolshevik Party.

**Mobilization of the Forces of the Revolution.** The Bolsheviks took the lead in the struggle against Kornilov. While calling for the suppression of the mutinous general, the Bolshevik Party denounced the Provisional Government, which consisted of masked Kornilovites, and the entire policy of which had served to strengthen the counter-revolution.

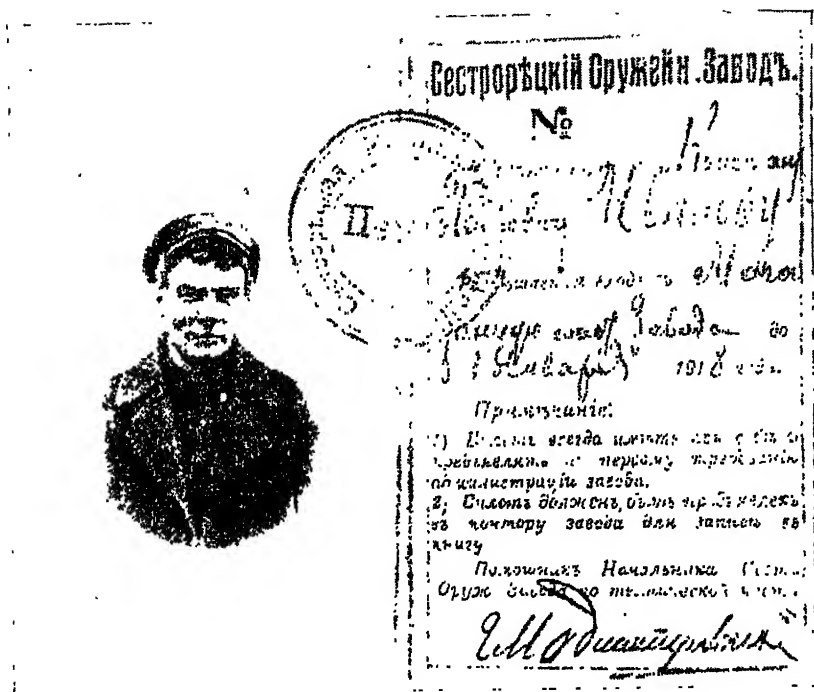
The proletariat rose to a man to defend revolutionary Petrograd. In the course of three days 25,000 workers enrolled in the Red Guard. The military organization of the Bolshevik Party enlisted the services of 700 army instructors to train the Red Guards. In the munition factories the production of shells was speeded up and armoured cars were fitted out. Within two days the workers at the Putilov Plant, working 16 hours a day, turned out about 200 new pieces of artillery. The railwaymen diverted Kornilov's troop trains to sidings, blocked the stations with empty trains, tore up the rails on railway bridges and removed vital parts from locomotives. Thousands of working people dug fortifications at the approaches to Petrograd.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Bolshevik agitators worked among Kornilov's troops explaining to them the object of Kornilov's mutiny. Enormous influence upon Kornilov's so-called "Savage Division" which consisted of Caucasian highlanders, was exercised by a delegation of highlanders who, on S. M. Kirov's advice, were sent to the division to explain the true objects of the counter-revolution. The soldiers and Cossacks in Kornilov's force began to go over to the side of the workers.

The Kornilov adventure collapsed. General Krymov committed suicide. Kornilov, Denikin and other generals were arrested, but the manner in which these monarchist generals were "held in custody" was very strange. Kornilov and his accomplices were "imprisoned" in the premises of a school known as Bykhov's High School, and the Tekinsky Regiment which Kornilov himself had formed, and which was loyal to him, was appointed to guard them. Actually, Kerensky protected the mutinous generals from popular anger and judgment.

The civil war begun by the generals and the bourgeoisie radically changed the relation of forces in the country. As Comrade Stalin wrote at the time: "The Kornilov revolt merely opened the valve for the accumulated revolutionary anger, it merely unbound the hitherto fettered revolution, whipped it up and pushed it forward" (J. Stalin, *On the Road to October*, Moscow, 1925, Russ. ed., p. 206).

The suppression of the Kornilov plot revealed that the position of the bourgeoisie and of their stooges, the Mensheviks and the Social-



The Identity Card Made Out to K. P. Ivanov Used By Lenin While Living Underground After the July Events

ist-Revolutionaries, was a hopeless one. Their influence among the masses was completely undermined. The Bolsheviks unmasked the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries whose entire policy had facilitated Kornilov's counter-revolutionary plot.

The suppression of the Kornilov plot also revealed that the Bolshevik Party had become the decisive force of the revolution. The masses saw that the Bolsheviks were the only effective force that was capable of crushing the counter-revolution, and, as a result, the Bolsheviks gained undivided influence in the factories and mills. In the rural districts and at the front the influence of the Bolsheviks grew as it had never done before. The soldiers demanded that stern retribution be meted out to the counter-revolutionaries. In connection with the contemplated trial of Kornilov, soldiers wrote from the front: "Dear comrades, don't make it a long trial; they betrayed us, they spilled our blood. Make it short—in twenty-four hours, just as they did to us."

Lastly, the suppression of the Kornilov revolt showed that after abandoning the policy of compromise the Soviets were beginning to revive and were becoming a great revolutionary force. A period of the Bolshevization of the Soviets began. On August 31, the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, by a majority vote, passed a resolution proposed by the Bolsheviks; on September 5, the Moscow Soviet did the same. The Bolsheviks gained control of the Soviets in the two capitals and also in the decisive industrial centres.

In view of the Bolshevization of the Soviets the Party, in September, brought forward again the slogan which had been withdrawn after the events of July 3-5, namely, "All power to the Soviets."

As Comrade Stalin has written: "The slogan 'All power to the Soviets!' was again put forward. But now this slogan had a different meaning from that in the first stage. Its content had radically changed. Now this slogan signified a complete rupture with imperialism and the passing of power to the Bolsheviks, for the majority of the Soviets were already Bolshevik. Now this slogan signified that the revolution must march directly towards the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of insurrection. More than that, this slogan now signified the organization and shaping of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a state" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 115).

The slogan "All power to the Soviets!" was a call for insurrection against the Provisional Government for the purpose of transferring all power to the Soviets controlled by the Bolsheviks.

Terrified by the revolution, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries countered the slogan of "All power to the Soviets!" by convening a Democratic Conference with the object of diverting the revolutionary movement into a less dangerous channel. The Democratic Conference which was made up of representatives of the compromising parties, Soviets, trade unions, Zemstvos, army organizations and co-operative societies, met on September 12, and rejected the coalition with the Cadets. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks thereupon proposed that the Democratic Conference should set up a Provisional Council of the Republic, known as the Pre-parliament, for the purpose, as they said, of controlling the actions of the government. Actually, however, their aim was to create another screen for their coalition with the bourgeoisie. While the Democratic Conference was in session, Kerensky obtained the consent of the Cadets Kishkin, Buryshkin, Konovalov and others to enter the government. The Pre-parliament remained a futile exercise in parliamentarism. The workers derisively called it the "Pre-bathhouse." \*

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\* A play on the words "predparlament" and "predbannik"—the latter meaning the dressing room at a public bath.—Tr.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party decided to boycott the Pre-parliament, but Kamenev and his supporters, wishing to divert the Party from its preparations for an insurrection, insisted that the Party should be represented in it. At a meeting of the Bolshevik group in the Democratic Conference, Comrade Stalin strongly opposed Kamenev's proposal and exposed the manoeuvre of the compromisers.

## 32. ORGANIZATION OF THE ASSAULT

**The Maturing Revolutionary Crisis.** Comrade Stalin has described the months of September and October 1917 as the period of preparation for the assault upon the rule of the bourgeoisie. "We must regard as the characteristic feature of this period," he wrote, "the rapid maturing of the crisis, the utter consternation reigning in ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, and the wholesale crossing over of vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks."

The revolutionary crisis matured while the imperialist war was still in progress. The war aggravated the economic chaos which in the autumn of 1917 assumed catastrophic dimensions.

The capitalists and landlords deliberately sapped the foundations of the economy of the country. In August and September the factory owners in Petrograd alone closed as many as 230 plants employing 61,000 workers. In the Donetz Basin, in the Urals, in Moscow, all over the country, in fact, the capitalists declared lockouts and threw hundreds of thousands of workers onto the street. The food situation became exceptionally acute. The landlords and kulaks sabotaged the state grain monopoly in spite of the fact that to please them the government had twice raised the "fixed prices" of grain. The grain profiteers, so-called "bagmen," overloaded the already dislocated transport system. The workers' bread ration amounted to less than 200 grams per day and hunger was making itself felt more and more. The capitalist Ryabushinsky, one of the organizers of the hunger and ruin, openly stated that the revolution would be crushed only if "the gaunt hand of famine, the impoverishment of the masses, clutches by the throat the false friends of the people—the democratic Soviets and committees."

In his work "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It," written in September 1917, Lenin showed that the hunger and ruin were due to the policy that was pursued by the Provisional Government in obedience to the will of the capitalists. Lenin formulated in this work the Bolshevik economic program, indicating the first steps toward Socialism.

"The result of the revolution has been," he wrote, "that the

political system of Russia has in a few months caught up with that of the advanced countries. But that is not enough. The war is inexorable; it puts the alternative with ruthless severity: either perish, or overtake and outstrip the advanced countries *economically as well*" (V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 117).

In August-September 1917, Lenin finished his book *The State and Revolution* in which he developed the fundamental propositions of Marx and Engels on the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and expounded the doctrine of the Soviets as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

At the end of September 1917, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries made another attempt to check the revolution by forming a new coalition government. It included "six capitalist ministers as the nucleus of the 'Cabinet' and ten 'Socialist' ministers to be at their service as the vehicles of their will" (J. Stalin, *On the Road to October*, Moscow, 1925, Russ. ed., p. 223). Kerensky remained Prime Minister.

The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie began secretly to plot another blow against the revolution.

Large counter-revolutionary forces were concentrated around the capital and shock battalions were formed of specially picked men who were allowed to join only on the recommendation of officers. These battalions consisted of the sons of kulaks and the bourgeoisie. More than ten such battalions were posted on the Northern and Western Fronts, in proximity to Petrograd and Moscow. Cossack and cavalry regiments which were regarded as exceptionally "reliable" were withdrawn from the front to the rear. Polish soldiers serving in the Russian army in Byelorussia were formed in a separate Polish Corps under the command of General Dowbor-Musnicki for the purpose of cutting the Western Front off from Petrograd and of capturing all the railway junctions on the line to Petrograd. A similar corps was formed in the Ukraine of Czech and Slovak prisoners of war for the purpose of cutting off the Southwestern and Rumanian Fronts from the revolutionary capital if this was found necessary.

**The Bolshevization of the Masses.** In September and October 1917, the political influence of the Party of Lenin and Stalin grew day after day and its membership steadily increased. Thus, in April 1917, the membership of the Bolshevik Party was 80,000, in the middle of August it had risen to 250,000, and in the beginning of October to 400,000. Under the leadership of the Bolsheviks a strike movement commenced among the proletariat. One hundred thousand leather workers in Moscow went on strike and remained out for two and a half months. Over 300,000 workers were involved in the textile strikes in Ivanovo-Voznesensk and Kineshma. Strikes of printers spread over nearly the whole country. The Baku workers waged



a long and stubborn struggle for a collective agreement. The very forms of the strike struggle changed. The workers not only downed tools but drove the capitalists and their managers out of the factories and took over the management of production themselves. The movement for workers' control of industry spread over the whole country and faced the workers with the struggle for power.

All over the country the overwhelming majority of the proletariat followed the lead of the Bolsheviks.

At the same time Bolshevik influence increased in the rural districts and in the army. Delegations of soldiers arrived in Petrograd and called upon the Petrograd Soviet immediately to launch a struggle for peace. The only organization which the war-weary masses of soldiers trusted and now followed was the Bolshevik Party. Soldiers at the front wrote the following letter to a Bolshevik army newspaper: "Comrades, workers and soldiers! Keep your weapons. Let's go to Petrograd and fight the bourgeoisie and the coalition government. The soldiers have lost all patience with this miserable life in the trenches."

In regiments and divisions the men drove out the officers, elected new army committees and in a number of localities even killed the more detested of their officers. In their letters home the soldiers advised their fellow villagers to drive out the landlords and to get Peasant Committees to take over the land.

In the rural districts the relatively peaceful forms of fighting the landlords, such as refusal to pay rent and seizing meadows and pastures, were superseded by the seizure of the landlords' land. Casting off the influence of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies adopted decisions to transfer all the land and all the landlords' farm property to the peasants. The poorest stratum of the peasants seized monastery and church lands. The peasant movement grew into a peasant insurrection.

The Provisional Government sent punitive expeditions to the countryside to suppress the peasant revolts. From March to June there were 17 cases of the armed suppression of peasant revolts; in July and August there were 39, and in September and October the number grew to 105.

All over Russia members of Land Committees were arrested *en masse* and put on trial for seizing landlords' land. This only served to excite the masses of the peasantry still more.

Referring to these incidents Lenin wrote: "It is obvious that if in a peasant country, after seven months of a democratic republic, matters have come to the pass of a peasant revolt, it is irrefutable proof that the revolution is suffering nation-wide collapse, that it is passing through a crisis of unprecedented severity, and that the forces of counter-revolution have gone the *full limit*" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1935, p. 227).

The peasantry began to cast off the influence of the Socialist-

Revolutionary party which had become, to use Lenin's words "*a party hostile to the people, hostile to the peasants, and counter-revolutionary.*"

In alliance with the poorest stratum of the peasantry, and with the bulk of the peasantry supporting the Bolshevik slogans, the proletariat marched towards the proletarian revolution.

The maturing of the proletarian revolution caused wavering and confusion in the ranks of the petty-bourgeois parties. After the July events a "Left" wing calling itself "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries, sprang up in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. A group of "Lefts" who called themselves Internationalists also sprang up among the Mensheviks. In the endeavour to retain the masses who were rapidly deserting them, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks came forward with the proposal to establish a republic in Russia. Hitherto, the question of the form of government, like all other questions arising out of the revolution, had been put off until the convocation of a Constituent Assembly.

The confusion that reigned in the ranks of the Menshevik and the Socialist-Revolutionary parties indicated that these compromising parties — the main prop of the bourgeoisie — were becoming isolated from the masses, and this brought nearer the victory of the socialist revolution.

The oppressed nationalities in Russia also rose up to fight the imperialist bourgeoisie; under the leadership of the Bolsheviks the movement for national liberation developed into a struggle for power. This was exceptionally evident in Central Asia. In September, a spontaneous mass revolt of the workers broke out in Tashkent, and for two weeks power was in the hands of the Soviet. The Provisional Government sent a punitive expedition to Tashkent under the command of General Korovnichenko, who dealt ruthlessly with the working population of the city.

In the Ukraine the Bolsheviks won over the masses and made vigorous preparations for an armed insurrection. In Kharkov, Kiev and Ekaterinoslav, Red Guard units were formed.

In Latvia, the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies were Bolshevik. In Estonia the Bolsheviks had a majority at the Congress of Soviets that was convened in October. In Finland a Regional Congress of Soviets which was held in the beginning of September adopted resolutions submitted by Bolsheviks.

Not only Russia, but all the countries of Western Europe that were suffering from the protracted war were passing through a revolutionary crisis.

In France workers went on strike in protest against the imperialist war. The anti-war movement spread to the army and in some regiments Councils of Soldiers' Deputies were formed. Soldiers even talked about marching on Paris to settle accounts with the capitalists and the government.

In Germany hunger riots were occurring all over the country. In the autumn, the crews of four battleships that were stationed at the naval fortress of Wilhelmshaven rose in armed revolt. The revolutionary proletarian organization known as the Spartacus Union conducted extensive activity among the masses.

Analyzing the events in Russia and abroad in an article he wrote at the end of September 1917, entitled "The Crisis Has Matured," Lenin said: "The end of September undoubtedly marked a definite turning point in the history of the Russian revolution and, to all appearances, of the world revolution also" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1935, p. 224).

### Chapter VIII

## THE VICTORY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

### 33. THE OCTOBER ARMED INSURRECTION

**Preparations for the Insurrection.** In September Lenin lived in Helsingfors, Finland, hiding from the sleuths of the Provisional Government. From here he closely watched the development of the revolution and sent directives to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party.

Between September 12 and 14, Lenin sent two remarkable letters to the Central Committee, one entitled "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power" and the other entitled "Marxism and Insurrection." In the first-mentioned letter he wrote that, having won the majority in the Soviets of the two capitals, the Bolsheviks can and must take state power into their hands. "The point is," he wrote, "to make the *task* clear to the Party. *Armed insurrection* in Petrograd and Moscow (with their regions), the conquest of power and the overthrow of the government must be placed on the order of the day" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, Moscow, 1935, p. 216).

In the second letter Lenin urged that insurrection must be treated as an art and that the conditions necessary for a successful outcome of the insurrection must be seriously studied. He outlined a general plan for the organization of the insurrection in which he insisted that the decisive forces must be concentrated at the decisive points, and that the revolutionary forces should without fail take the offensive, for, he said, defence means the death of armed insurrection.

On September 15, Lenin's letters were discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. The only one to oppose Lenin's directives to prepare for insurrection was the traitor Ka-



V. I. LENIN

menev. On Comr.de Stalin's proposal, the Central Committee decided to send copies of the letters to the largest Party organizations. During the latter part of September the Bolshevik Party developed extensive activities in preparation for the armed insurrection, and on October 7, Lenin secretly arrived in Petrograd for the purpose of directing it. Stalin informed him of the progress that was being made in the preparations.

On October 10 (23), Lenin attended a meeting of the Central Committee, for the first time since the July events, and delivered a report on the preparations for the insurrection in which he proposed that any suitable occasion be utilized for the purpose of launching it. He emphasized that the entire external and internal situation of the country, including the war situation, had prepared the ground for a political insurrection: the Provisional Government had decided to send the revolutionary garrison out of Petrograd and to surrender the capital to the Germans, and the Russian bourgeoisie had opened negotiations for the conclusion of a separate peace with German imperialism in order to crush the Russian revolution. He said it was time to fix the date for the insurrection and to make the military-technical preparations for it.

Stalin, Sverdlov, Dzerzhinsky and the other members of the Central Committee supported Lenin's proposals. Those blacklegs of the revolution, Zinoviev and Kamenev, were the only ones to oppose him.

The Central Committee condemned these defenders of capitalism and passed a resolution, moved by Lenin, calling for the immediate organization of armed insurrection and the subordination of all the Party's activities to this task. The resolution read: "Considering therefore that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organizations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the action of our people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 135).

After strongly rebuffing the capitulators, the Central Committee continued with its preparations for the armed insurrection. A Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was set up which served as a legal headquarters for the insurrection. The main force of the insurrection was to be the Petrograd Red Guard, which in October numbered 12,000 armed men. It was decided to call the sailors of the Baltic Fleet from Helsingfors to assist the revolutionary capital. Committees of Three were set up in every district of Petrograd to guide the insurrection in the given district. Meanwhile, congresses of Soviets were held in most of the regions throughout the country, and these passed resolutions calling for the transfer of all

power to the Soviets. On October 16 (29), on Lenin's recommendation, a second meeting of the Central Committee of the Party was held to which representatives of the Petrograd Bolsheviks were invited in order that a larger circle of Party members could be informed of the plan for the insurrection. This meeting reaffirmed the decision to launch the armed insurrection. Kamenev and Zinoviev again demanded that the insurrection be postponed. Comrade Stalin spoke and denounced these traitors. He said: "Objectively, what Kamenev and Zinoviev propose amounts to giving the counter-revolution the opportunity to organize."

That same day a Party Centre was set up, headed by Comrade Stalin, for the purpose of exercising practical leadership of the insurrection.

After sustaining defeat at the meeting of the Central Committee, Zinoviev and Kamenev resorted to an act of unprecedented treachery. They sent a statement to the Menshevik newspaper *Novaya Zhizn*, which published it in its issue of October 18, declaring that they disagreed with the decision of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party to launch an insurrection. This was a downright betrayal. Concerning this action Lenin wrote: "Kamenev and Zinoviev have *betrayed* to Rodzyanko and Kerensky the decision of the Central Committee of their Party on armed insurrection and the fact that preparations for armed insurrection and the choice of the date for the armed insurrection were being concealed from the enemy" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches*, Moscow, 1938, p. 605). Following in the footsteps of Kamenev and Zinoviev, Trotsky too divulged the date of the insurrection by stating at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet that the Second Congress of Soviets that was to be held on October 25 must take over power. Kerensky took advantage of this betrayal to take a series of military measures for the purpose of forestalling the insurrection.

The Bolsheviks intensified their activities in preparing for the armed insurrection. In conformity with the plan drawn up by Comrade Stalin, the workers of the Urals were to come to the aid of Petrograd, those of Ivanovo-Voznesensk were to go to the aid of Moscow, and in Byelorussia the soldiers at the front, in the event of being sent against Petrograd, were to be disarmed. In preparing for the insurrection Comrade Stalin was assisted by Y. M. Sverdlov, F. E. Dzerzhinsky, V. M. Molotov, G. K. Orjonikidze, M. I. Kalinin, A. A. Andreyev and other comrades.

In the provinces preparations for the armed insurrection were made under the direction of those tried and trusted pupils of Lenin, K. E. Voroshilov in the Donetz Basin, Artyom (Sergeyev) in Kharkov, V. V. Kuibyshev in the Volga Region, A. A. Zhdanov in the Urals, L. M. Kaganovich in the Polesie Region, M. V. Frunze in Ivanovo-

Voznesensk and S. M. Kirov in the North Caucasus. The Bolsheviks intensified their activities in the Baltic Fleet and on the Northern Front, the nearest front to the capital.

In the factories feverish activities were conducted in arming and drilling the workers. Units of the Red Guard were quickly formed. The workers of the Sestroretsk Small-Arms Factory delivered the weapons they made to the headquarters of the Red Guard. The workers of the Schlüsselburg Gun Powder Works sent by way of the Neva a bargeload of grenades to the headquarters of the Red Guard in Petrograd. At the Putilov Works there was a Red Guard unit of 1,500 men, ready for action.

Lenin called a conference of the leaders of the military organization and discussed with them what ships and troops should be called in from Kronstadt and Helsingfors. The Revolutionary Military Committee sent its Commissars to all the army units for the purpose of preparing the soldiers for the insurrection.

**The Insurrection in Petrograd.** Forewarned by the traitors Kamenev, Zinoviev and Trotsky, the Provisional Government believed that the proletarian insurrection would commence on October 25, 1917, the day the Second Congress of Soviets was to open, and took measures to suppress it on that date.

The headquarters of the counter-revolution hastily drew up a plan to capture the Smolny Institute, where the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had its headquarters. Military forces were drawn to the capital and the cadet schools were prepared for action. The Provisional Government ordered the revolutionary cruiser *Aurora*, which was undergoing repairs on the Neva, to put out to sea immediately, as it was afraid to allow the ship to remain in Petrograd. The bridges that connected the working-class districts with the centre of Petrograd were ordered to be raised.

Early in the morning of October 24 (November 6), a detachment of cadets arrived in motor trucks at the premises of *Rabochi Put* (the temporary title of *Pravda*) with the object of confiscating the latest issue of that newspaper. The workers in the printing plant managed to inform Comrade Stalin of this raid; soon a detachment of revolutionary soldiers arrived on an armoured car and the cadets beat a hasty retreat. The *Rabochi Put* came out with an appeal for the overthrow of the Provisional Government. In a leading article in that issue entitled "What Do We Need?" Comrade Stalin wrote: "The time has come when further delay will be fatal for the whole cause of the revolution. The present government of landlords and capitalists must be replaced by a new government of workers and peasants. . . ." (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 611.*)

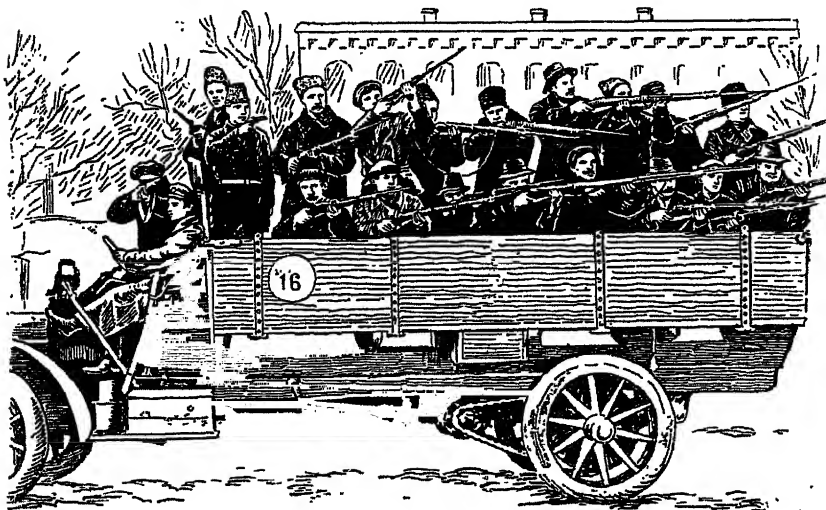
Towards the evening of October 24 (November 6), Lenin, on learning of the attack launched by the counter-revolution, sent the Central Com-

mittee of the Bolshevik Party his last letter demanding that the insurrection should be started forthwith. "We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, first disarming the cadets (defeating them if they resist), and so forth," he wrote. "Under no circumstances must power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 159).

To prevent Kerensky from taking action on the 25th, the day the Congress of Soviets was to open, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party instructed the Revolutionary Military Committee to start the insurrection at once.

In the morning of October 24 (November 6), the Revolutionary Military Committee ordered the military units to prepare for action; it also ordered that a close watch be kept on the army units that were approaching the capital, and that the guard at bridges and railway stations be reinforced. It decided to call in the assistance of the warships and sailors of the Baltic Fleet and with this object sent the Central Committee of the Soviets of the Baltic Fleet in Helsingfors a prearranged telegram containing the words: "Send regulations"; this meant "the insurrection has commenced, dispatch ships and men."

That evening Lenin, disguised as a workingman, with his face tied up and wearing a wig, and accompanied by a comrade sent from the Central Committee, arrived in the Smolny. Men from the



Red Guards. The Insurrection in Petrograd in October 1917





V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin Conversing with Red Guards in the Smolny in October 1917. *Drawing by P. Vassilyev*

Lithuanian Regiment and detachments of Red Guards were called to the Smolny, where they took up their posts, supported by machine guns, at all the entrances and exits. Detachment after detachment of Red Guards kept arriving. Earlier in the day the Red Guards were armed with weapons obtained from the arsenal in the Fortress of Peter and Paul which had gone over to the Bolsheviks.

In conformity with the prearranged plan, detachments of workers proceeded to occupy state buildings; after midnight the Central Telephone Exchange, the State Bank, the General Post Office, the railway stations and the principal government offices were occupied.

The Revolutionary Military Committee ordered the cruiser *Aurora* to move up from the Franco-Russian Shipyards on the Neva to the Winter Palace. The commander of the *Aurora* refused to obey the order on the plea that the Neva was too shallow, whereupon the sailors took soundings, found that the fairway was sufficiently deep, arrested the commander and steered the ship in the appointed direction. The *Aurora's* guns were turned on the last refuge of the bourgeois government—the Winter Palace.

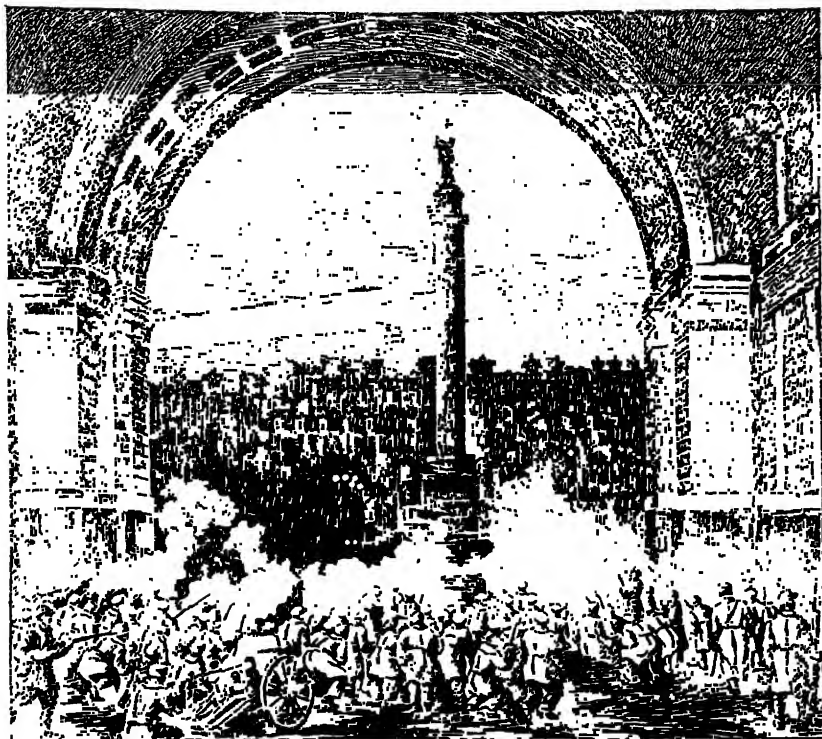
The insurrection proceeded in an organized manner according to plan. By 9 a. m. on October 25 (November 7), seven companies of the Kexholm Regiment had occupied the approaches to the Winter

Palace, where the Provisional Government was assembled. By this time it was evident that the government was completely isolated; not a single military unit supported it. On the morning of the 25th Kerensky fled from the insurgent capital in a motor car flying the United States flag.

At 10 a.m. on October 25 (November 7), the Revolutionary Military Committee issued a manifesto proclaiming the overthrow of the Provisional Government. The manifesto, which had been drawn up by Lenin, stated:

"The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The power of state has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Revolutionary Military Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

"The cause for which the people have fought—the immediate propos-



Red Guards Shell the Winter Palace in the Evening of October 25  
(November 7) 1917. Shot from a film

al of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production and the creation of a Soviet government—is assured.

“Long live the revolution of the workers, soldiers and peasants!” (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917*, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 613.)

On October 25, a special meeting of the Petrograd Soviet was held. The appearance of Lenin, the leader of the revolution, was greeted with round after round of applause and cheers. Addressing the meeting, Lenin said: “Comrades, the workers’ and peasants’ revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has taken place. . . . From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this revolution, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of Socialism” (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917*, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 614).

The Petrograd Soviet adopted a resolution welcoming the proletarian revolution and expressing the conviction that the Soviet government which the revolution created would march firmly along the road to Socialism.

By this time the insurgents controlled the whole city except the Winter Palace. Lenin ordered the Winter Palace to be captured before the opening of the Congress of Soviets. The Provisional Government was called upon to surrender forthwith, but it refused, whereupon, at 9 p. m., the assault on the Winter Palace was launched. After the prearranged signal, the firing of a gun from the Fortress of Peter and Paul and shots from the six-inch guns of the *Aurora*, the Red Guards, sailors and soldiers, led by the Bolsheviks, stormed the Winter Palace.

Almost the entire Petrograd Young Socialist Workers’ League (the future Young Communist League) had joined the ranks of the Red Guard, and the young proletarians constituted more than one-third of its strength.

The broad masses of the workers and soldiers were imbued with tremendous enthusiasm and confidence in victory. The Provisional Government that was besieged in the Winter Palace waited in vain for the assistance that had been promised from the front.

**The Second Congress of Soviets.** The Second Congress of Soviets was opened in the Smolny at 10:45 p. m. on October 25 (November 7). The assault on the Winter Palace was still in progress. Many of the congress delegates had taken part in the insurrection. The Smolny Institute looked like a military camp. Armoured cars, automobiles, motor trucks filled with armed workers, columns of Red Guards and sailors with machine-gun cartridge belts across their chests and hand grenades strung around their belts, Red Cross nurses in ambulance carts and Red Cross cars moved in an endless stream to and from the Smolny.



Lenin Addressing the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. From a painting by N. Serdybryany

At the congress there were 650 delegates, of whom 390 were Bolsheviks.

When the congress was opened the Mensheviks, the Bundists and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries called upon the soldier and non-Party delegates to leave, but only a handful of Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders left the hall.

As they left the indignant delegates shouted at them: "Kornilovites!", "Deserters!"

A delegate from the Twelfth Army got up and said amidst general approval: "We must take power into our hands. Let them go. The army is not with them!"

At 2:10 a. m. the Winter Palace was captured. The wretched group of frightened Ministers of the Provisional Government was arrested and taken to the Fortress of Peter and Paul.

At 5 a. m. on October 26 (November 8), the Congress of Soviets passed the historic decision declaring that all power had passed to the Soviets and approved the appeal to the working people, written by Lenin, announcing this great historic event. The appeal read: "Backed by the will of the vast majority of workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the congress takes the power into its own hands" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol II, Moscow, 1947, p. 226).

The second session of the congress opened at 8:40 p. m. on the same day (October 26 [November 8]). At this session Lenin, who was greeted with indescribable rejoicing, read the Decree on Peace, which called upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to conclude a just, democratic peace without annexations and without indemnities, on the basis of the self-determination of oppressed nations. The congress unanimously passed this decree.

Lenin next read the Decree on Land, which proclaimed that all landlord, appanage, monasterial and church lands, with their livestock, farm buildings and implements, were to pass without compensation under the control of Volost Land Committees and Uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. In all Soviet rule brought to the peasants over 150,000,000 hectares of land and relieved the peasants of the payment of rent to the landlords amounting to about 500,000,000 gold rubles per annum.

The Decree on Land proved to the peasants that "there are no more landlords in the countryside," as Lenin expressed it.

This decree was based on the General Peasant Instructions which had been drawn up on the basis of 242 local Peasant Mandates, the main one of which had been the abolition of the private ownership of land and the transfer of the land to the peasants without compensation through the Land Committees and Soviets.

At 2:30 a. m. the congress passed a decree announcing the formation of the first Soviet government—the Council of People's Commissars. The congress endorsed Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and Lenin's unfailing colleague, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, as People's Commissar of Nationalities, the function of which was to help to unite the oppressed nations in a single fraternal socialist federation of nations. The activities of the Council of People's Commissars were to be controlled by a Central Executive Committee elected by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

The first Soviet government consisted exclusively of Bolsheviks, although the latter had invited the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries to join it. Before the Second Congress of Soviets was opened the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries were still organizationally connected with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. It was only after the latter had left the congress together with the Mensheviks that the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries formed their own separate party. Conscious of the pressure of the entire mass of the peasantry who were thirsting for land, the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries had been constantly wavering between the Bolsheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionary-Menshevik bloc and urging the Bolsheviks to reach an agreement with the latter. Lenin called them "fellow travellers of the proletarian revolution" and foresaw that they would betray the revolution at the critical moment. Influenced by the revolutionary temper of the peasants and soldiers, the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries announced that they supported the October Revolution. It was then that the Bolsheviks invited them to enter the government.

But the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries opposed the formation of a Soviet government; they wanted "a homogeneous socialist government," by which they meant a Cabinet consisting of representatives of different parties, ranging from the People's Socialists to the Bolsheviks. The Second Congress of Soviets, however, rejected this proposal and set up the first Soviet government entirely of Bolsheviks.

The congress closed at 5 a. m. on October 27, amidst the enthusiastic cries of the delegates and Petrograd workers: "Long live the revolution!", "Long live Socialism!"

**Suppression of the Kerensky and Krasnov Anti-Soviet Revolt.** The victory of the socialist revolution in Petrograd evoked the desperate resistance of the deposed classes. The Committee for the Salvation of the Fatherland and the Revolution, which was headed by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries and backed by the Entente imperialists, became the centre of the counter-revolution. The workers and soldiers called this committee "The Committee for the Salvation of the Counter-Revolution."

The first armed revolt of the counter-revolution was organized by

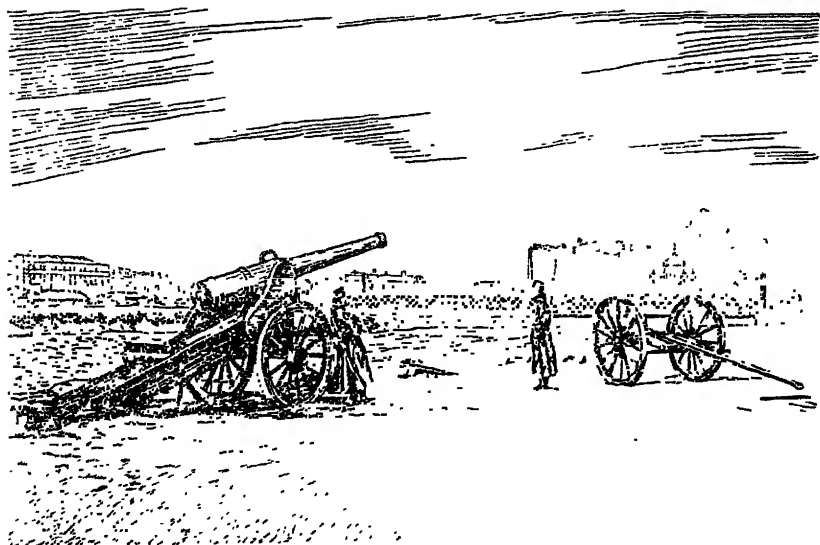
Kerensky and the Cossack General Krasnov. After fleeing from Petrograd, Kerensky withdrew several Cossack units from the front and sent them against Petrograd under the command of General Krasnov to crush the proletarian revolution. On October 28 (November 10), Krasnov occupied Tsarskoye Selo (now the town of Pushkin) near Petrograd.

The workers of the capital rose to defend the revolution. They marched to the firing line, dug trenches, erected fortifications and manufactured arms. Work in the factories went on day and night. The Putilov Plant received orders to fix armour plate on two railway flat cars, and Lenin, who was personally directing the organization of the defence of Petrograd, went to the plant to see how this order was being carried out. He found the workers busily engaged on the job. He spoke to the workers, encouraging them to further efforts, and told them what the situation was at the front. Within twenty-four hours the order was executed. Lenin ordered destroyers to move up the Neva to cover the flanks of the Red forces, and as many as ten thousand men ready for action were concentrated on the Pulkovo Hills.

Taking advantage of the fact that the Red forces had gone off to the front, the counter-revolutionaries in Petrograd organized a mutiny of cadets in the city. On the night of October 28 (November 10), a Red Guard patrol detained two suspicious men. One of them tried stealthily to get rid of some document or other, but one of the Red Guards saw it and picked it up. It turned out to be the plan for the mutiny. Thanks



Sailor Red Guards in Gatchina



The Gun which Shelled the Cadets in Occupation of the Kremlin

to the united and vigorous efforts of the workers and soldiers the mutiny was crushed by 4 p. m. next day. On October 31 (November 13), the revolutionary workers and soldiers routed a force of Cossacks near Pulkovo. This defeat caused rapid disintegration among the Cossack units, and in spite of all the orders issued by Krasnov, the Cossacks refused to take to arms. A delegation of Soviet sailors went to the Cossacks in Gatchina and promised that they would be allowed to return to their homes if they stopped fighting the Soviets and delivered up Kerensky. The Cossacks agreed to this, but Kerensky managed to escape from Gatchina disguised as a Red Cross nurse. Krasnov was arrested but released later on giving his word of honour not to fight against the Soviets.

He failed to keep his word, however. He fled to the Don, which subsequently became a hotbed of counter-revolution.

**The Insurrection in Moscow.** On receiving news of the insurrection in Petrograd the Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party, on October 25 (November 7), took measures for an insurrection in Moscow.

On the night of October 25, the Bolshevik Military Centre called upon the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Moscow Soviet to garrison the Kremlin with troops who were loyal to the revolution; but instead of doing this the Revolutionary Military Committee leaders entered into negotiations with the counter-revolutionary headquarters. In the evening of October 26, the Moscow Committee of



the Bolshevik Party held a special meeting and demanded the cessation of these negotiations. Meanwhile, the counter-revolutionaries launched an offensive. On October 27, cadets occupied all the bridges across the Moscow River. At 7 p. m. that day Colonel Ryabtsev, the commander of the counter-revolutionary forces, presented an ultimatum to the Revolutionary Military Committee, demanding that it should dissolve.

The cadets captured the Kremlin by a ruse, surrounded the revolutionary soldiers there and shot them down with machine guns. This outrage roused the indignation of the workers and soldiers of Moscow. The Moscow Committee of the Bolshevik Party called upon the workers to take to arms in order to crush the counter-revolution and to seize power forthwith. The Moscow proletariat and soldiers unanimously responded to this appeal. The workers sent Red Guard units to the assistance of the Moscow Soviet. The offensive converged from the various districts of the city to the centre, where the Moscow Soviet headquarters were situated. The initiative in the fighting passed to the districts.

An exceptionally active role in the October fighting in Moscow was played by the workers of the Simonov District (now the Lenin District) where the AMO (now Stalin) Automobile Plant, the Dynamo Plant and other big plants were situated. The workers captured the arsenal and armed themselves, and detachments of Red Guards fought their way from the district towards the Moscow Soviet and took a most active part in the assault upon the cadets. The workers and soldiers fought solidly in the other districts as well. In the Lefortovo and Basmanny Districts they captured pieces of artillery and for two days bombarded the Alexeyevsky Military School and finally compelled the cadets to surrender. In the centre of the city the Red Guards and soldiers attacked the General Post Office, the Central Telegraph Office and the Central Telephone Exchange. In the Khamovniki District the Red Guards dislodged the cadets from the army food warehouse and captured the Krymsky Bridge and the Bryansk (now Kiev) Railway Station. The workers of the Krasnaya Presnya District cleared the cadets out of the whole district up to the Novinsky Boulevard.

Red Guard units came to the assistance of the Moscow workers from the adjacent towns. Detachments of poor peasants armed with shot-guns and axes arrived from the villages in the Moscow Region and were organized and armed by the workers of the railway repair shops. Red Guards from Petrograd, sailors from Kronstadt, weavers from Ivanovo and workers from Tula on motor trucks and armed with machine guns, hastened to the assistance of Moscow.

On October 31 (November 13), the Red Guards captured the General Post Office, the Central Telegraph Office and the railway stations, and two days later began to bombard the Kremlin.

At 9 p. m. on November 2 (15), after six days' fighting, the counter-

revolutionaries were defeated and forced to surrender. All power passed to the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Moscow Soviet.

**The October Revolution at the Front.** The Second Congress of Soviets issued an appeal to the soldiers at the front to support the insurrection of the Petrograd workers, and stated that the Soviet government would exert all efforts to terminate the war. The decrees on peace and on the land were immediately circulated to all the soldiers' organizations, but the Army Committees, led by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, tried to conceal from the soldiers the decisions which had been adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets. The soldiers, however, sent deputations to the Petrograd Soviet to learn the truth about the events that had taken place in the capital. When these delegates returned and informed their comrades that Soviet rule had been established in Petrograd, the masses of soldiers heartily welcomed it. The proletarian revolution triumphed first on the Northern and Western Fronts, which were closest to Petrograd. Here the Bolsheviks had conducted extensive activity; nearly all the Regimental Committees were headed by Bolsheviks and, as a consequence, the soldiers declared unanimously for Soviet power. The other fronts—the Southwestern, Rumanian and Caucasian—being very remote from the centre of the revolution, did not at once learn of the victory of the proletarian revolution in Petrograd; but as the truth about the events came through and the soldiers learned of the Soviet decrees they too joined the revolution.

Although defeated in Petrograd and in Moscow, the counter-revolution still made efforts to organize and pass to the offensive. The representatives of the anti-Soviet parties which had been defeated by the revolution, and the military missions of the Entente countries which refused to recognize the Soviet government, flocked to the General Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief in Mogilev, which now became the centre of a new counter-revolutionary plot. General Head-



A Sailor. *Poster*

quarters kept from the soldiers the decree on peace and began to form units for a drive against Petrograd. The Soviet government ordered General Dukhonin, Chief of the General Staff, who after the flight of Kerensky, had proclaimed himself Supreme Commander-in-Chief, immediately to open negotiations for an armistice with the German Command, but Dukhonin refused to obey this order, whereupon Lenin dismissed Dukhonin and sent revolutionary detachments to Mogilev which captured General Headquarters and liquidated this hotbed of counter-revolution.

### 34. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SOVIET STATE

#### **Failure of Attempts to Liquidate the Proletarian Dictatorship.**

After the armed insurrection the proletariat became the ruling class in Russia.

The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie continued in new and more intense forms. As Lenin wrote: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 573.) The proletarian dictatorship set out to crush the resistance of the vanquished exploiters and to build communist society.

Emphasizing the significance of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the struggle against the vanquished bourgeoisie, Comrade Stalin said: "The dictatorship of the proletariat is not a mere change of government, but a new state, with new organs of power, both central and local. . . ." (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 42.)

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries launched a struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat and demanded the establishment of a "homogeneous socialist government" in place of Soviet rule.

The All-Russian Executive Committee of the Railwaymen's Union, (known as Vikzhel) which was controlled by Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, threatened a general railwaymen's strike if negotiations were not opened on the issue of power. Meanwhile Krasnov and Kerensky were at the gates of the capital. Kamenev, who was then the Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, opened negotiations with the Railwaymen's Executive as to the establishment of a coalition government. He committed an act of unparalleled treachery by conceding the demand of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks that Lenin, the leader of the proletariat, should be removed from the post of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and that either Avksentyev or

Chernov, both Socialist-Revolutionaries and creatures of the counter-revolution, be appointed in his place.

After the Kerensky and Krasnov revolt was crushed, Lenin demanded that negotiations with the Railwaymen's Executive should cease forthwith. In answer to this Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov and the few supporters they had, resigned from the Central Committee of the Party. Lenin demanded that these deserters and blacklegs of the revolution should be removed from all Soviet and Party work. In an angry letter he addressed to Zinoviev and Kamenev he wrote: "... You are causing indecision in the ranks of the fighters in an insurrection which is still in progress. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 57.)

The Central Committee of the Party addressed a letter "To All Party Members and to All the Toiling Classes of Russia" in which it emphasized that only a Bolshevik government could now be regarded as the Soviet government.

At that time Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov was elected as Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

A steadfast Leninist and a man of extraordinary strong will and outstanding organizing talent, Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov played a tremendous part in building up the Party and Soviet power after the victory of the October Revolution. His iron will, seething energy, enormous capacity for work, phenomenal memory, astonishing knowledge of men and his ability to find and place the necessary workers made him a priceless leader and organizer of Soviet power.

**The Breakup of the Old State Machine.** The fundamental antithesis between bourgeois revolutions (including the French bourgeois revolution of 1789) and the Great October Socialist Revolution lay in that "the French (and every other) bourgeois revolution, while liberating the people from the chains of feudalism and absolutism, put new chains upon them, the chains of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, whereas the socialist revolution in Russia smashed all chains whatsoever and liberated the people from all forms of exploitation. . . ." (J. Stalin, S. Kirov and A. Zhdanov, *Comments on a Synopsis for a Textbook on Modern History*.)

After overthrowing the rule of the capitalists and landlords and becoming itself the ruling class, the proletariat had to organize in a new way the state power it needed to be able to crush the resistance of the exploiters and lead the peasants in building the new socialist society.

This process of creating the new proletarian authority was a complicated and difficult one, for it entailed the breaking up of the old bourgeois machinery of state and the creation of a new type of state authority. As Lenin wrote: "... All the revolutions which have occurred up to



Y. M. Sverdlov

now have helped to perfect the state machine, whereas it must be smashed, broken.

"This conclusion is the chief and fundamental thesis in the Marxian doctrine of the state" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 159).

The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first attempt in history at the breakup of the bourgeois state machine by a proletarian revolution. The revolutions of 1905 and of February 1917, which set up Soviets, not only continued the cause of the Paris Commune but took further gigantic strides in that direction. As Comrade Stalin wrote: "The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot arise as the result of the peaceful development of bourgeois society and of bourgeois democracy; it can arise only as

the result of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, the bourgeois army, the bourgeois bureaucratic machine, the bourgeois police" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1945, p. 44).

By the decree of December 16 (29), 1917, plenary power in the army was transferred to the Soldiers' Soviets and Committees. The Commissars of the Provisional Government were removed and the election of officers, right up to front commanders, was introduced. All the old ranks, titles and decorations were abolished. This decree thus completed the democratization of the army and signified the complete breakup of the old army. The organization of the new army was sanctioned by the decree of January 15 (28), 1918, about the formation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

The Soviet government liquidated the old machinery of violence and oppression by the decree of November 22 (December 5), 1917, which abolished the old judiciary and established the new, people's courts.

The police force had been shattered by the workers in the very first days of the February revolution. In its place the Provisional Government had formed a militia, but not on the principle of recruiting it from among the ranks of the working people. After the victory of

the proletarian revolution a Workers' Militia was organized to maintain revolutionary order, and was placed under the control of the local Soviets.

A series of decrees was issued abolishing the old division of the population into estates. Thus, on November 10 (23), 1917, a decree was passed abolishing the different estates and civil ranks. The designations current till then (noble, merchant, burgher, peasant, etc.) were abolished and the designation of Citizen of the Russian Republic was introduced to cover all the inhabitants of Soviet Russia.

Decrees were also issued abolishing the privileges of the church. Thus, the decree of January 21 (February 3), 1918, separated the church from the state and the school from the church. The state ceased to maintain the clergy and missionaries, relieved schoolchildren from the obligation of learning the scriptures, and proclaimed religion and the church to be the private affair of citizens.

The Soviet state emancipated women and purged family relationships of feudal survivals. The decrees issued on December 19 and 20, 1917, old style, introduced civil marriages, placed children under the protection of the proletarian state and granted women equal rights with men in all respects.

On December 21 (January 3), spelling reform was introduced, thus making it easier for the vast population which had been kept in ignorance for generations to learn to read and write. On January 25 (February 7), 1918, a decree was issued abolishing the old style calendar and introducing the calendar in use in all European countries.

**First Steps Towards Socialism.** The October victory ushered in the first stage of socialist construction. The Great October Socialist Revolution, as Lenin said, completed, in passing, the task of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and at the same time took the first steps towards Socialism.

The first decrees of the Soviet State introducing socialist measures were also aimed at doing away completely with the survivals of feudalism, serfdom and the caste system. In this respect the Soviet State did more in a few weeks than the Cadets, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries had done during the eight months they were in power.

On October 30 (November 12), 1917, a decree was issued introducing the 8-hour working day.

To combat the sabotage of the capitalists, workers' control of industry was introduced, the Regulations on Workers' Control being passed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on November 14 (27), 1917. Workers' control meant that the workers prevented the deliberate closing of factories, the removal of finished goods and stocks of raw materials and fuel from the premises, and the stopping of pro-

duction, and kept watch over the machinery. The decree introducing workers' control was one of the first steps towards Socialism, for it gave the workers an opportunity to learn to manage industry and to administer the state. Tens of thousands of workers passed through this school.

From workers' control the Soviet State gradually passed on to workers' management of industry. The case of the first Soviet factory, formerly Lickin's Textile Mill, may serve as an example of how this transition was made. The workers at this mill, discovering that the owner was deliberately sabotaging production, raised the demand that they be allowed to take over the management. On November 17, 1917, Lenin signed a decree nationalizing the mill. The higher officials and technical staff of the mill boycotted the workers' management and refused to work without the capitalists, but the factory committee came to the aid of the workers' management and production at this first nationalized Soviet plant was organized.

On December 5 (18), 1917, a decree was issued setting up the Supreme Council of National Economy. This was a militant organ of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat established for the purpose of directing industry. Lenin wrote that "the Supreme Council of National Economy must not be converted into a parliament, but must be just as militant an organ for combating the capitalists and landlords in the sphere of economics, as is the Council of People's Commissars in the field of politics" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 108).

The railways and the merchant fleet were taken over by the proletarian state.

Foreign trade was declared a monopoly of the Soviet State. The loans contracted by the tsarist regime and the Provisional Government were annulled, thus liquidating forever Russia's economic dependence upon West-European capital which was gradually transforming our country into a colony of British and French imperialism.

On December 14 (27), the All-Russian Central Executive Committee issued a decree nationalizing all private banks and merging them with the State Bank. This measure shattered one of the most important props of the economic sway of the bourgeoisie and strengthened the material basis of the young proletarian state.

The decree on land passed by the Second Congress of Soviets abolished the economic basis of the domination of the landlords and cleared the way for the struggle to reorganize petty-bourgeois peasant farming on collective lines.

Such are the most important decrees that were issued in the first months of the Soviet regime. These decrees laid the foundation of the new Soviet socialist system of state and marked the beginning of the reorganization of the country's economy on socialist lines.

**Building the Soviet Machinery of State.** The establishment of Soviet power met with the strong opposition of the bourgeois intelligentsia who had formerly been in the service of the overthrown landlord and capitalist classes. In order to undermine the young proletarian state, government officials and the higher categories of administrative employees engaged in sabotage. Politically this sabotage was directed by the Cadets, Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who on the very day that power passed into the hands of the Soviets, called upon government officials to refuse to obey the new authorities. The officials of all fourteen Ministries declared a general strike, being financed by the bourgeoisie to the extent of over 2,000,000 rubles. The banks refused to finance those enterprises which had been placed under workers' control, and bank clerks carried away the keys of the vaults. The Food Administration announced that it would no longer be responsible for supplying the capital with food. The bread ration was reduced to 150 grams per day. The Ministry of State Relief stopped paying pensions to orphans, disabled persons and the aged. The Technical Engineers' Union expelled those of its members who obeyed the Soviet decree on workers' control and co-operated with the Bolsheviks. The Post and Telegraph Employees' Union ordered all local post and telegraph offices to hold up all orders issued by the Soviet government.

Notwithstanding this sabotage, the Soviet government and the Bolshevik Party built up a network of Soviet institutions. Communication was established between the central organs of the Soviet State and the local Soviets, but during the first period work was carried on under very difficult conditions.

Here is how N. K. Krupskaya has described the conditions of this period: "Work in the Smolny went on not only during the day, but all through the night. In the beginning all the work was done in the Smolny—Party meetings, sessions of the Council of People's Commissars and the work of the People's Commissariats. Telegrams and orders were sent out from there. People streamed to the Smolny from everywhere. And what kind of staff did the Council of People's Commissars have? In the beginning, four utterly inexperienced people, working without respite, doing everything that was required. . . . Lenin often had to do the most routine work, making phone calls, etc."

On November 15 (28) the Council of People's Commissars ordered that the work of all the People's Commissariats be conducted in the premises of the corresponding Ministries and that the Commissars should gather in the Smolny only in the evenings. The reason for this decision was that in the process of combating sabotage a new Soviet machinery of state was beginning to be built up.



A tremendous part in organizing the Soviet machinery of state was played by the trade unions, which sent members to work in the People's Commissariats, financed the Commissariats which were not receiving money from the banks, and so forth.

The very lowest ranks, the most oppressed sections, of the people yielded the new forces that proceeded to build up the Soviet State.

**The Merging of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies with the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.** The operation of the Decree on Land gave rise to a fierce class struggle in the rural districts. The newly organized People's Commissariat of Agriculture issued regulations governing the work of the Rural Area Land Committees which had begun to put the land decree into force. The Socialist-Revolutionaries tried to hinder the holding of new elections for these Land Committees and also the establishment of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies. They concealed from the peasants the decrees on land and peace adopted by the Congress of Soviets, and also decrees of the Soviet government. The peasants learned of these only from letters sent home by soldiers and from workers and soldiers who arrived in the villages. Many villages sent deputations to Lenin. Lenin, in plain and simple terms, explained to the peasants the tasks of the new workers' and peasants' government and urged them to take advantage of the new Soviet laws and to strengthen the alliance with the working class in order to become masters of their own lives.

Lenin said: "What we need is an alliance between the poorest peasants and the workers—when we get that Socialism will triumph all over the world" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 51).

In November 1917, the All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Soviets was held in Petrograd. At this congress Lenin demanded of the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries that they drop their policy of compromise with the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries. Reckoning with the wishes of the masses of the peasantry, the Bolsheviks invited the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries to join the government. These latter, yielding to the pressure of the peasant masses, accepted the Bolshevik terms and appointed their representatives to the Council of People's Commissars.

To tighten the alliance between the workers and the peasants it was decided to unite the Executive Committees of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies and of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies in one All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

At a joint session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee,

the Petrograd Soviet and the Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, a resolution was unanimously adopted to unite the Soviets of Workers' Deputies with the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

**"The Declaration of Rights of the Nations of Russia."** The main principles of the Soviet national policy were proclaimed in the Declaration of Rights of the Nations of Russia that was signed by Lenin and Stalin and published on November 2 (15), 1917. The plain, clear and powerful words in which the Declaration was couched found an echo not only among the nations inhabiting Russia but also among the colonial and dependent peoples abroad. The Declaration proclaimed the emancipation by

the Great October Socialist Revolution of all the nations inhabiting Russia and laid down the following principles of the national policy of the Soviet State: 1) Equality and sovereignty of the nations of Russia; 2) the right of the nations of Russia to free self-determination, including the right to secede and form independent states; 3) abolition of all and sundry national and national-religious privileges and restrictions; 4) the free development of the national minorities and ethnographical groups inhabiting the territory of Russia. This policy of the Soviet State satisfied the age-long strivings of the oppressed nationalities and thereby strengthened their alliance with the Russian proletariat who had established themselves in power.

**The Establishment of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission.** On December 7 (20), 1917, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and Sabotage was set up to protect the proletarian dictatorship and safeguard all the gains of the revolution. This Commission soon became, as Comrade Stalin called it, "the ever-wakeful guardian of the revolution, the drawn sword of the proletariat."

At the head of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission the Party placed that most faithful comrade-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin, firm Bolshevik and staunch fighter in the revolution, Felix Edmundo-



F. E. Dzerzhinsky

vich Dzerzhinsky. F. E. Dzerzhinsky was born in 1877, and was one of the veterans of the Polish and Russian working-class movements. His whole life was a record of revolutionary daring; it was a life of the tireless activity of a professional revolutionary interspersed with imprisonment, exile and escapes. "Only the grave can put a stop to the struggle I am waging," he wrote. "Here in prison things are bad, sometimes frightful and yet, if I had to start all over again, I would do what I have been doing up to now." The February revolution liberated Dzerzhinsky from the penal servitude prison where he had spent nine years. The October Revolution entrusted him with the task of safeguarding the power of the Soviets. His sterling honesty, courage and Bolshevik power of penetration won for him the love of and tremendous authority among the broad masses who called him "Iron Felix." Comrade Stalin said of him: "A terror to the bourgeoisie—that is what Felix Dzerzhinsky was."

The Soviet intelligence department which was directed by F. E. Dzerzhinsky, was built up with the aid of staunch, devoted and vigilant advanced workers and with the constant backing of the working people, who helped the Extraordinary Commission to discover plots and wipe out the enemies of the revolution.

### 35. THE TRIUMPHAL MARCH OF SOVIET POWER.

**The Expansion and Consolidation of Soviet Power.** The power of the Soviets quickly spread throughout the country. In most of the industrial districts where the Bolsheviks had won over the Soviets before the October insurrection, power passed to the Soviets peacefully. There Revolutionary Military Committees were set up and Red Guards occupied the post and telegraph offices and other public buildings. Backed by the trade unions, the Revolutionary Military Committees organized administrative machinery and made preparations for the summoning of Congresses of Soviets to set up plenipotentiary organs of Soviet power. This was the case in numerous districts in the Urals, the Donetz Basin, in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, in Shuya and other towns.

In a number of towns, however, the establishment of Soviet power was delayed because coalition Revolutionary Military Committees had been set up, and the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries did all they could to prevent the transfer of power to the Soviets.

Lenin described the period from October 25 to February 18 (up to the offensive launched by the German imperialists) as the period of the triumphal march of Soviet power. The Soviets triumphed quickly because the masses, while the Provisional Government was still in power, had lost faith in the Kerensky regime owing to its policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie.

The decisions of the Second Congress of Soviets, the decrees of the Soviet government, the manifestoes and appeals issued by the Bolshevik Party and Lenin's speeches and newspaper articles were therefore welcomed by the masses with tremendous enthusiasm.

Speaking at a meeting of the Moscow Soviet on March 12, 1918, Lenin said:

"Soviet power has not only been established in the big towns and factory districts, it has penetrated to all the remote corners of the country" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 381).

In the villages around industrial districts, Soviet power was organized by factory workers; in the non-industrial districts it was organized by the poorer peasants and Bolshevik-minded soldiers returned from the front. The latter brought Bolshevik newspapers with them, held village meetings at which they explained the tasks facing the Soviets in power, and under their direction new elections to the Soviets were held.

At the end of December 1917, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs issued an order abolishing all the former local government bodies and replacing them by Soviets.

**The Defeat of Kaledin and Dutov.** At the very beginning of the October Revolution a geographical demarcation of a kind between the revolution and the counter-revolution was to be observed. As Comrade Stalin wrote: "Inner Russia with her industrial, cultural and political centres—Moscow and Petrograd, with a nationally homogeneous, mainly Russian, population, has become the base of the revolution. The outlying regions of Russia, on the other hand, mainly the Southern and Eastern regions, with no important industrial and cultural and political centres, with a population extremely diverse nationally and consisting of privileged Cossack colonizers on the one hand, and disfranchised Tatars, Bashkirs, Kirghiz (in the East), Ukrainians, Chechens, Ingushes and other Moslem peoples on the other—has become the base of the counter-revolution" (Lenin and Stalin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Russ. ed., p. 276).

This demarcation was distinctly visible in the counter-revolutionary operations of General Dutov in Orenburg and of Kaledin on the Don.

The Cossacks had long played the part of colonizers in the Orenburg territory. The conditions of the Russian settlers, "strangers" as they were called, and particularly of the native inhabitants—Kirghiz, Bashkirs, Tatars and Kazakhs—were extremely hard. The Provisional Government permitted the Cossacks in Orenburg to set up a Cossack Regional Representative Assembly, which still further helped to transform the Cossacks into an exclusive, privileged military caste.

After capturing Orenburg, Chelyabinsk and Troitsk, General Dutov planned to establish contact with the counter-revolutionary forces in Siberia and the Urals, and with those in the Don and the Kuban *via* the Volga Region. This was a plan for the military encirclement and economic isolation of Soviet Russia so as to cut her off from the rich grain and other produce regions.

The workers of Orenburg sent a deputation to Lenin and Stalin to ask for assistance in the fight against Dutov. Accordingly, detachments of sailors were sent from Petrograd, and workers' Red Guard units were sent from the Volga Region and the South Urals. An active part in defeating Dutov was played by the native inhabitants, particularly the Kazakhs and the Kirghiz. The rich feudal elements among these nationalities, who were organized in the nationalist party known as Allash, actively supported Dutov.

In the beginning of December 1917, a congress was held in Orenburg of representatives of the bourgeois and feudal elements of Kazakhstan. At this congress the Allash party set up a counter-revolutionary Kazakh government known as the Allash Orda, which co-operated with General Dutov in his struggle against the Soviets. At the end of December 1917, Dutov's forces were routed by the Red Guard, and in January 1918, Orenburg became a Soviet city.

Similar defeats awaited the Cossack counter-revolution in the Don and Kuban Regions. The Don Region had become a refuge for the counter-revolution since the Kornilov mutiny and particularly so after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. It was here that Kornilov, Denikin and the other generals had fled.

On learning that Soviet power had been established in Petrograd, the Ataman of the Don Cossacks, Kaledin, proclaimed the independence of the Don Region and prepared for war against the Soviets. Counter-revolutionary officer units were formed, which went to make up the Whiteguard Volunteer Army that was commanded by Generals Kornilov and Denikin. In December 1917, Kaledin captured Rostov and prepared for a march into the Donetsk coal basin.

Kaledin received considerable assistance from the Ukrainian Central Rada, which sent him arms, ammunition and money, and while allowing detachments of army cadets and Cossacks to pass through its territory, refused to allow Red Guard units from the North to go through to fight Kaledin.

To help the workers of the Donetsk Basin in their struggle against Kaledin, Red Guard detachments were sent from Soviet Russia. Cossacks home from the front and the poorer Cossack farmers who demanded land and peace also rose against Kaledin. At the end of December, a congress of Cossacks who had served at the

front, representing forty-six regiments, was held at Kamenskaya, at which a Don Revolutionary Military Committee was set up, headed by the Cossack Podtyolkov. This Revolutionary Military Committee recognized the Soviet government and called upon working Cossacks to fight Kaledin. Backed by the revolutionary Cossacks, the Red Guards launched an offensive against Novocherkassk and Rostov. The officer and cadet units sent against them by Kaledin were defeated.

Realizing that his position was hopeless, Kaledin committed suicide. At the end of February 1918, the Red forces occupied Rostov and Novocherkassk. Soviet power was established in the Don Region.

The remnants of the White forces commanded by General Kornilov fled to the Kuban, where they hoped to obtain the assistance of the counter-revolutionary Cossack Kuban Rada; but by this time Soviet power was being established in the Kuban Region.

On March 14, 1918, Kuban Red Guard forces dislodged the forces of the Kuban Rada from Ekaterinodar. The remnants of the Kuban counter-revolutionary forces fled beyond the river Kuban, and power in Ekaterinodar passed over to the Revolutionary Military Committee.

When Kornilov learned of the flight of the Rada from Ekaterinodar he went to the assistance of the Kuban counter-revolutionaries. On the way his bandit troops robbed and murdered the peasant "strangers" and the Cossack poor; his line of march was strewn with corpses. Kornilov united all the counter-revolutionary detachments under his own command and on April 11 launched an offensive against Ekaterinodar. The town was defended by Red Guards and the entire working population. The assault, which lasted three days, was repulsed. The Whiteguards were defeated. Kornilov was killed. The remnants of the Whiteguards, under the command of Denikin, fled. Soviet power became firmly established in the Kuban Region.

**The Fight to Establish Soviet Power in North Caucasus.** After the victory of the October Revolution in Petrograd, the upper strata of the Don and Terek Cossacks concluded an alliance with the Chechens, the rich highlanders of Daghestan, to prevent the establishment of Soviet power in the Cossack and mountain regions of North Caucasus. This alliance between the Cossack upper strata and the feudal highland rulers, however, found no support among the masses. There was a long-standing enmity between the North Caucasian highlanders and the Cossack colonizers over the land. The "strangers," i. e., the landless Russian peasants who had settled in North Caucasus and did not belong to the Cossack caste, also waged a struggle against the upper strata of the Cossacks.

The situation was exceptionally tense in the Terek Region with its extremely diverse population. Of a total of 1,200,000 inhabitants

in the Terek Region, the Cossacks numbered only 150,000, the peasant "strangers" 300,000, while the rest constituted the small highland peoples. The Cossacks owned on the average eleven hectares of the best land per head, whereas whole villages of highlanders lived on land rented from the Cossacks. Many of the Cossack stanitsas had only recently belonged to the highlanders, whom the tsarist authorities had evicted and had forced into the rocky mountain gorges. Before the revolution, the highlanders were almost regarded as outlaws. It was no crime to kill a highlander on Cossack land. The tsarist authorities constantly incited the highland peoples against each other, particularly Christians against Moslems.

The February revolution did scarcely anything to relieve the tension in North Caucasus. After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the local aristocratic army officers incited the highland peoples to fight the Soviets.

An extremely important part in the struggle for Soviet power in this complicated situation was played by S. M. Kirov, who returned to Vladikavkaz after the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. He travelled from village to village explaining to the people the laws which had been passed by the Soviet Congress on coming to power, and organizing the highland poor for the struggle against the counter-revolution. The working folk among the Cossacks and highlanders were not yet ready for the immediate establishment of Soviet power. There were no Soviets yet among the highland peoples, only so-called National Councils existing.

In February 1918, a People's Soviet for the Terek Region was set up on the recommendation of S. M. Kirov, and this Soviet convened in Pyatigorsk a congress of all the nationalities of the region. In spite of the provocative work of the counter-revolutionaries, peace was solemnly proclaimed at this congress, which was guided by S. M. Kirov, between all the peoples of Terek.

The congress passed a resolution moved by Bolsheviks recognizing the authority of the Council of People's Commissars and sent a telegram of greetings to Lenin.

Four days later the Regional People's Congress moved from Pyatigorsk to Vladikavkaz, the centre of the Terek Region and there elected the Terek Council of People's Commissars, headed by the Bolshevik Noy Buachidze.

By the spring of 1918, Soviet power was established in all parts of the Russian "Cossack Vendée"—in the Don, Kuban and Terek Regions.

**The Struggle for Soviet Power in Siberia.** In the large centres of Siberia—Omsk, Tomsk, Novonikolayevsk (now Novosibirsk) and others—power passed into the hands of the Soviets in the early days of November 1917 (old style). The Soviets

had to conduct a struggle against the counter-revolutionary organizations of the "regionalists," who demanded the formation of an independent Siberian region, and also of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and kulaks. In December 1917, the "regionalists" gathered at an extraordinary All-Siberian Congress at which it was decided to convene a Siberian Constituent Assembly in March 1918, and before that to convene a Siberian Regional Duma.

In the early part of February the Duma delegates began to gather in Tomsk, but here part of them were arrested by the local Soviet by order of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Siberia (Tsentsosibir). The delegates who remained at large formed an underground counter-revolutionary Provisional Siberian Government.

In January and February Soviet power was also established in the remoter regions of Siberia—in the majority of districts in the Transbaikal Region, and in the northern districts of the Tobolsk Gubernia.

At the end of February 1918, the Second All-Siberian Congress of Soviets was held at which a new Central Executive Committee of Soviets (Tsentsosibir) was elected, headed by Bolsheviks. Soviet power prevailed over the whole of Siberia.

**Dispersion of the Constituent Assembly.** The Constituent Assembly became the watchword of the bourgeois counter-revolution, which rose up to fight the Great October Socialist Revolution. In opposition to the slogan of "All power to the Soviets" the bourgeoisie and its agents, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, issued the slogan of "All power to the Constituent Assembly!" On November 29 (December 12), 1917, the Soviet government issued a decree ordering the arrest of the members of the Central Committee of the Cadet (Constitutional-Democratic) Party as enemies of the people.

The Soviet authorities did not hinder the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, since the peasants had to be given an opportunity of outliving illusions they had about it. The elections to the Constituent Assembly resulted in a majority for the Socialist-Revolutionaries: of the 715 seats they secured 412, while the Bolsheviks won only 183, all the other parties receiving an insignificant number of seats. Actually, however, not only did the Right-wing Socialist-Revolutionary majority in the Constituent Assembly not reflect the real relation of forces in the country. It did not even represent the actual relation of forces within the Socialist-Revolutionary Party itself. The elections to the Constituent Assembly took place in November, after Soviet power had been established, whereas the lists of candidates for election to the Assembly had been drawn up before the victory of the



revolution. During the period between the nominations and the elections the Socialist-Revolutionary party had split, but the peasants and soldiers who supported the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries had to vote for the general Socialist-Revolutionary ticket.

On December 13 (26), 1917, Lenin published his "Theses on the Constituent Assembly" in which he pointed out that the masses of the people were demanding that the Constituent Assembly should recognize the power of the Soviets and the major decrees on peace, land and workers' control.

The Constituent Assembly was opened on January 5 (18), 1918, by Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov on behalf of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Sverdlov read the Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, drawn up by Lenin and Stalin. The Declaration called upon the Constituent Assembly to proclaim Russia a Soviet Republic, to abolish the private ownership of land and to endorse all the Soviet laws. The Constituent Assembly, however, rejected the declaration, whereupon the Bolsheviks declared that the Constituent Assembly "expresses the yesterday of the revolution," that they had no desire to cover up the crimes of the enemies of the people and were leaving the Assembly. After the Bolsheviks left, followed by the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries, the proceedings soon terminated. At 4 a. m. a sailor named Zheleznyakov walked up to Chernov, the Chairman of the Assembly, and said: "The guards are tired. It's time to close." The Deputies filed out of the hall. On January 6, 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee issued a decree proclaiming the Constituent Assembly dissolved.

The workers and peasants unanimously approved of the dispersion of what they called the "Constitute," for they saw that the Constituent Assembly wanted to hand power back to the capitalists and landlords.

Delegates to a Peasant Congress then in session, when asked to indicate their attitude to the Constituent Assembly gave the following written answers: "I place no hopes in the Constituent Assembly," "The soldiers have no confidence in the Constituent Assembly and expect nothing good from it," "Confidence in the Constituent Assembly has been shaken," and so on.

**The Third Congress of Soviets.** The Great October Revolution in Russia took place at the time when the war on the Western Front had entered an acute stage. This explains why the Soviet state at first gained what Lenin called a sort of temporary independence of international relations. Without the backing of the foreign imperialists the forces of the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship proved to be impotent. At that time, as Lenin said "... the Civil War was one unbroken triumph for Soviet power because its enemies, the exploiters, the landlords and the bourgeoisie, had no political

or economic support whatever. . . . " (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 390.)

The broad results of the triumphal march of Soviet power in the country were summed up by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets that was held in January 1918. The congress adopted the Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People, drawn up by Lenin in conjunction with Stalin, which stated: "Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, belongs to these Soviets."

The Third Congress confirmed all the decrees issued by the Soviet authorities laying the foundation of the new Soviet Socialist State and confirmed the point that the main task of the Soviet State was to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to build socialist society in Russia and to fight for the victory of Socialism in all countries.

After a report delivered by Comrade Stalin, the congress proclaimed that "the Soviet Russian Republic is established on the basis of the free union of free nations as a federation of Soviet national republics." The formation of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.) ensured the free and voluntary, and therefore close and durable, alliance of the working people of all the formerly oppressed nations in Russia.

The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets is of enormous importance in the history of the Soviet State, for it consolidated its socialist foundations.

### 36. SOVIET POWER BRINGS LIBERATION TO THE OPPRESSED NATIONS

**Recognition of the Independence of Finland.** The bourgeois "National Councils" and regional bourgeois "governments" that were set up before the Great October Socialist Revolution wanted to preserve the bourgeois order and therefore declared war on the Soviet government.

The workers and peasants in the non-Russian regions, having under the leadership and with the assistance of the Russian workers set up Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, launched a struggle to establish Soviet power in the non-Russian regions as well.

Among the first to start this struggle for power was the working class of Finland. But the treacherous Right-wing of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party surrendered power to the bourgeoisie. The Finnish Sejm sanctioned the formation of the reactionary government headed by Svinhuvud. An extraordinary congress of the Social-Democratic Party was called to settle the issue of power.

On November 14 (27), 1917, J. V. Stalin, then People's Commis-

sar of Nationalities, addressed this congress and after greeting the workers of Finland explained the program of the Soviet State on the national question. The Soviet government guaranteed the independence of Finland. "Complete freedom," proclaimed Comrade Stalin, "for the Finns, as well as for all the other nationalities of Russia, to arrange their lives in their own way. A voluntary and honest alliance of the Finnish people with the Russian people! No tutelage, no supervision from above, over the Finnish people!" (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917, Selected Writings and Speeches, Moscow, 1938, p. 659.*) He called upon the workers of Finland to follow the example of the Russian workers, and promised them the fraternal assistance of the Soviet Republic.

The congress, however, being controlled by the opportunists, did not decide in favour of the seizure of power by the working class of Finland. With the aid of the Finnish Social-Democrats, the bourgeoisie consolidated its rule. The bourgeois majority in the Finnish Sejm voted in favour of secession from Russia.

In December 1917, the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree recognizing the independence of the Finnish Republic, thus demonstrating that the Soviet government really stood for the right of nations to self-determination, including secession as state entities.

**The Struggle to Establish Soviet Power in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.** The working people in the Baltic countries greeted the October Revolution with tremendous enthusiasm; the landlords and the bourgeoisie of those countries met it with hatred and fear.

The Lithuanian bourgeoisie wanted to separate Lithuania from Soviet Russia and prevent the establishment of Soviet power there. In December 1917, the Lithuanian National Council (Taryba), of which the reactionary landlord Smetona was President, proclaimed the independence of the Lithuanian state. Taking advantage of the fact that Lithuania had been occupied by German troops during the war, the National Council appealed to the Kaiser for assistance in combating the Bolshevik revolution, and expressed readiness to enter into a military, economic and customs union with Germany. Thus, the bourgeois Lithuanian Republic was formed with Vilna as its capital; but the real masters in Lithuania were the German military authorities who were backed by the Lithuanian landlords and the bourgeoisie.

In the unoccupied part of Latvia, Soviet power was established in October (November) 1917. An important role during the October days was played by the Lettish Rifles who took an active part in the proletarian revolution. They occupied the railway junctions in Latvia and prevented troops being sent from the front to help Kerensky. But Soviet rule in Latvia was short-lived. Terrified by the proletarian revolution, the Latvian bourgeoisie and landlords appealed

to the German authorities to send troops into the part of Latvia where Soviet power had been established. The request was fulfilled by the German imperialists.

In Estonia the proletarian revolution took place immediately after the victory of the armed insurrection in Petrograd. All power passed into the hands of the All-Estonian Soviet of Workers', Peasants', Soldiers' and Sailors' Deputies. With the establishment of Soviet power in Estonia the land and factories were nationalized. This victory of the Soviets in Estonia greatly facilitated the success of the October fighting in Petrograd, for the Soviet authorities in Estonia prevented the dispatch of troops from the front to assist Kerensky. In the middle of November 1917, the Estonian National Sejm, which had become a centre of the counter-revolution, was dissolved, whereupon, the Estonian bourgeoisie and the Baltic barons prepared for a *coup d'Etat*. They appealed to the German military authorities, who as early as September 1917 had occupied a number of Estonian islands, to occupy Estonia itself. Thus commenced the German occupation of the whole of Estonia.

**The Struggle to Establish Soviet Power in the Ukraine.** As Comrade Stalin has stated, in the border regions the Great October Socialist Revolution encountered a barrier in the shape of the "National Councils" and regional "governments" that had been set up before the October Revolution. "The revolution, which started in the centre," he wrote, "could not long be confined to this narrow territory. Once having triumphed in the centre, it was bound to spread to the border regions. And, indeed, from the very first days of the seizure of power, the revolutionary wave spread from the North all over Russia, sweeping over one border region after another. But here it struck a dam in the form of the 'National Councils' and regional 'governments' (Don, Kuban, Siberia) which had come into being before the October Revolution. The fact is that these 'national governments' would not hear of a socialist revolution. Bourgeois by nature, they had not the slightest intention of destroying the old bourgeois world; on the contrary, they considered it their duty to preserve and consolidate it by every means in their power. Essentially imperialist, they had not the slightest intention of breaking with imperialism; on the contrary, they were never averse to seizing and subjugating bits and morsels of 'foreign' nationalities whenever opportunity offered. No wonder that the 'national governments' in the border regions declared war on the socialist government in the centre. And, once they had declared war, they naturally became centres of reaction attracting all that was counter-revolutionary in Russia" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, p. 63).

After the October Revolution the Ukrainian Central Rada became a bulwark of the bourgeois counter-revolution. On learning

that power in Russia had passed into the hands of the Soviets it passed a resolution refusing to recognize the Soviet State and declaring that all attempts to establish Soviet power in the Ukraine would be combated. It concluded an agreement with various Russian counter-revolutionary organizations and parties and proclaimed its loyalty to the "Allies," *i. e.*, the Entente.

The masses of the workers and peasants in the Ukraine, however, were roused to enthusiasm by the news of the victory of the insurrection in Petrograd and rose up to fight for the establishment of Soviet power. In Kiev, the workers, led by the Bolshevik Andrei Ivanov, set up a Revolutionary Committee, which organized an insurrection against the Provisional Government.

Just when the Kiev workers were on the point of victory, the Central Rada, which claimed to be neutral but was actually helping the troops of the Provisional Government, treacherously attacked the Kiev Soviet and seized power. The Rada concluded an alliance with Kaledin and allowed Cossack units to pass through its territory from the front to the Don. At the same time the Rada refused the right of passage to Soviet troops who were marching against Kaledin.

After exhausting all means of reaching a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the Soviet government, on December 4 (17), sent the Rada a categorical demand to stop assisting Kaledin. The Ukrainian workers and the poorer strata of the peasantry began to rise in revolt against the Rada.

On December 11 (24), 1917, an All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets was held which set up a Central Executive Committee; the latter set up the first Soviet government in the Ukraine. Troops from Soviet Russia were sent to the assistance of this government.

On January 16 (29), 1918, in answer to the call of the Bolsheviks the workers in Kiev rose in armed insurrection against the Rada. During the fighting, which lasted several days, exceptional heroism was displayed by the workers employed in the Kiev Arsenal, who, though surrounded and even after their ammunition, drinking water and provisions had run out, refused to surrender, and kept on fighting. The Rada inflicted cruel reprisals upon the Arsenal's brave defenders. But Soviet troops were already approaching Kiev and, on January 27 (February 9), assisted by the Kiev workers who rose in revolt again, they captured the city. The Rada fled to Zhitomir. Soviet power was established all over the Ukraine.

**The Struggle to Establish Soviet power in Byelorussia.** The fight to establish Soviet power in Byelorussia was waged by the revolutionary-minded masses of workers, peasants and soldiers at the front, led by the Bolsheviks. As soon as the first news of the

October insurrection in Petrograd was received in Minsk, the Minsk Soviet seized power, liberated from prison all the soldiers whom the Kerensky government had arrested for "political offences" and formed them into a revolutionary regiment.

The counter-revolution made an attempt to use Cossacks in order to crush the Minsk Soviet, but an armoured train and a regiment of soldiers arrived from the front and the Cossacks were beaten off. The Bolsheviks in Polesie, led by L. M. Kaganovich, established control over the movements of troop trains and held up and disarmed the Cossack contingents.



S. G. Shaumyan

The Eleventh Congress of the Western Front, which was held in Minsk in the latter half of November 1917, proclaimed the establishment of Soviet power in Byelorussia.

**The Struggle to Establish Soviet Power in Transcaucasia.** The population of Transcaucasia, numbering seven million, was made up of dozens of different nationalities. In the endeavour to keep the masses from taking part in the proletarian socialist revolution, the enemies of the revolution fomented strife among these nationalities. The Transcaucasian bourgeois nationalists—the Armenian Dashnacks, Azerbaijanian Mussavatists and the Georgian Mensheviks—who had got on very well with the Provisional Government, decided to secede from Russia as soon as Soviet power was established.

With this object in view they set up, on November 11 (24), 1917, a Transcaucasian Commissariat, which was a bloc of all the bourgeois parties to fight the Soviet State. Claiming to assert the independence of the Transcaucasian peoples, this Commissariat broke with Soviet Russia and concluded an alliance with the counter-revolutionaries in the Don and Kuban Regions. The Transcaucasian Commissariat formally united Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, but actually each of these countries was ruled by its own National Council. Acute inter-national strife broke out among them. The

Transcaucasian counter-revolution was led by the Georgian Mensheviks. The latter captured the Tiflis Arsenal and the premises and funds of the Regional Soviet of the Caucasian Army and began to form national units. They intended to arm these units with the weapons of the demobilized Caucasian Army. In January 1918, an armoured train, supported by armed gangs of Mussavatists, was sent to Shamkhor, where it fired on troop trains carrying soldiers home from the Caucasian Front. As a result of this treacherous onslaught 2,000 Russian soldiers were killed. The Shamkhor massacre roused the most profound indignation and protest among the working people in Transcaucasia, but the Transcaucasian Commissariat retaliated to this by sterner measures of repression; it suppressed workers' newspapers, arrested a number of Georgian Bolsheviks and broke up demonstrations.

On February 10, the workers and soldiers in Tiflis organized a huge meeting in the Alexander Park to protest against the counter-revolutionary activities of the Transcaucasian Commissariat. Armed detachments sent by the Mensheviks surrounded the meeting and shot down the unarmed workers with machine guns. That day the Transcaucasian Sejm which consisted of Menshevik, Dashnack, Mussavatist, Socialist-Revolutionary and Cadet members of the dispersed Constituent Assembly, was opened in Tiflis. White terror was intensified in Transcaucasia. Punitive expeditions were sent to suppress the peasant movement and thousands of peasants were shot down.

Unable to cope with the growing revolutionary movement the Transcaucasian "national governments" appealed to the Western imperialists for assistance in crushing the workers and peasants.

Transcaucasia and the rich oil fields of Baku in particular had long attracted the West-European imperialists. The separation of Transcaucasia from Russia and the rule of the bourgeois nationalists in that region now facilitated the seizure of Transcaucasia by the imperialists.

The Transcaucasian Sejm first opened negotiations with the Entente, but at that time the latter lacked the necessary forces to undertake such an operation. The Sejm then decided to strike a bargain with the German coalition and opened negotiations with Turkey. The Turks, however, backed by the Mussavatists, broke off these negotiations, seized Kars and Batum, and commenced a drive into the interior of Transcaucasia. Through the mediation of the Mussavatists, the Dashnacks and Mensheviks came to an arrangement with the German and Turkish imperialists, and on their demand, in April 1918, proclaimed the "independence" of Transcaucasia.

But the British imperialists also had designs upon Transcaucasia. In the beginning of 1918, they sent a military expedition there through

Persia. The head of this expedition enlisted the services of Russian army officers who had fled to Persia from Soviet Russia and began to make preparations to seize Baku.

The Baku Soviet of Workers' Deputies, in which the Bolsheviks were in the majority, was the only Soviet in Transcaucasia that welcomed the insurrection in Petrograd and refused to recognize the authority of the Transcaucasian Sejm. In a resolution passed in the beginning of March 1918, the Baku Soviet declared: "The City of Baku must be transformed into a base for the struggle to establish Soviet rule in Transcaucasia." This struggle was started first of all against the bourgeois nationalist parties, the Mussavatists and Dashnacks, who were conducting provocative activities among the Azerbaijanians and among the Armenians in Baku. On March 18, the Mussavatists rose in revolt against Soviet rule, but the Baku workers, led by the veteran Bolshevik Stepan Shaumyan, crushed this counter-revolutionary uprising. Soviet rule was consolidated in Baku and the heroic Baku Commune was formed.

**The Struggle to Establish Soviet Power in Central Asia.** While the fighting in Petrograd was at its height the Bolsheviks in Tashkent began to prepare to seize power, but on October 28 (November 10), 1917, Cossacks and army cadets surrounded the Tashkent Soviet and arrested the members of the Revolutionary Committee. Sirens sounded the alarm and in response as many as 3,000 armed workers, Russians and Uzbeks, rallied to liberate the prisoners. An insurrection commenced. Cossacks and army cadets occupied the Tashkent fort and dispatched armoured cars against the city. The workers built barricades and barred their way. The fighting lasted for nearly four days. Uzbek and Kirghizian peasants came from the surrounding villages to help the workers.

On October 31 (November 13), 1917, after stubborn fighting, power passed into the hands of the Soviets. The members of the Revolutionary Committee were liberated from prison and the Soviet government of Turkestan was set up in Tashkent.

To combat Soviet rule in Central Asia, the bourgeois nationalists and Russian Whiteguard colonizers, assisted by the British, set up in Kokand, in November 1917, a government of their own called the "Kokand Autonomy," which started civil war in Central Asia. In February 1918, the Kokand "government" was liquidated by the Turkestan Red Guard, which consisted not only of urban workers—railwaymen and cotton warehousemen—but also of Uzbek, Kirghiz, Kazakh and Turkmen handicraftsmen and peasants.

**The People's Commissariat of Nationalities.** In the very first days after the victory of the October Revolution a People's Commissariat of Nationalities (Narkomnats) was formed to direct the struggle of the oppressed nationalities for their liberation and



to give practical effect to the national policy of the Soviet State. The Narkomnats was headed by Comrade Stalin. It was faced with the enormous task of directing the political, economic and cultural growth of the non-Russian nationalities, which, with a total population numbering 65,000,000, differed very widely in language, habits of life and in their level of cultural and political development.

In the beginning of 1918, Comrade Stalin, in the name of the Narkomnats, addressed a message to the Soviets of Kazan, Ufa, Orenburg and Ekaterinburg and to the Council of People's Commissars of the Turkestan Region, in which he explained the fundamental aims of the Soviet State on the national question and outlined a complete program of action for rallying the masses around the Soviets. He proposed that the border regions should be given autonomy and that steps be taken forthwith to set up local schools and courts, local organs of power and local political and educational bodies, all to function in the native languages. The Soviets were to strengthen the alliance between the workers and peasants of the different nationalities and lead them to Socialism.

The People's Commissariat of Nationalities did considerable work in developing the national culture of the formerly oppressed nationalities, trained personnel to conduct work among them, published books and newspapers in their respective languages and set up schools and other educational institutions.

The Narkomnats was particularly energetic in protecting the interests of the national minorities who had been utterly downtrodden under the old regime, such as the Yakuts, Nentsi, the peoples of the Volga Region, etc. On the suggestion of the Narkomnats the Council of People's Commissars, in the summer of 1918, issued a decree calling for the "uprooting of the anti-Semite movement." Lenin wrote the following on the draft of the decree: "Pogrom-mongers and those conducting pogrom propaganda are to be outlawed."

The Great October Socialist Revolution razed to the ground that prison of the peoples—tsarist Russia, laid a firm foundation for the alliance of the Russian workers and peasants with the working people of all the non-Russian nationalities, awakened the most backward peoples of Russia to political life and opened up to them the road to Socialism.

The policy of the Soviet State on the national question was of enormous international importance and exercised exceptional influence upon the peoples of the Orient.

The Soviet government annulled all the unequal treaties which the tsar had concluded with Turkey and Persia and began to withdraw the troops from the regions which Russian tsarism had occupied, such as Turkish Armenia, and others.

The struggle which the Soviet government waged for the independence of small nations gained for it the confidence of the formerly most backward and downtrodden nations.

### 37. THE WORLD-HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

**Reasons for the Victory of the October Revolution.** The Great October Socialist Revolution was brought about by the working class and the poorest strata of the peasantry. The revolution was socialist in character. After overthrowing the exploiting classes, the proletariat set up the proletarian dictatorship in the shape of the Soviet State. The Soviet State set out to build complete socialist society in our country.

The great proletarian revolution smashed the chains of imperialism and overthrew the rule of the bourgeoisie with relative ease.

"There were several reasons for this comparatively easy victory of the socialist revolution in Russia. The following chief reasons should be noted:

"1) The October Revolution was confronted by an enemy so comparatively weak, so badly organized and so politically inexperienced as the Russian bourgeoisie. Economically still weak, and completely dependent on government contracts, the Russian bourgeoisie lacked sufficient political self-reliance and initiative to find a way out of the situation. It had neither the experience of the French bourgeoisie, for example, in political combination and political chicanery on a broad scale, nor the schooling of the British bourgeoisie in broadly conceived crafty compromise. It had but recently sought to reach an understanding with the tsar; yet now that the tsar had been overthrown by the February revolution, and the bourgeoisie itself had come to power, it was unable to think of anything better than to continue the policy of the detested tsar in all its essentials. Like the tsar, it stood for 'war to a victorious finish,' although the war was beyond the country's strength and had reduced the people and the army to a state of utter exhaustion. Like the tsar, it stood for the preservation in the main of big landed property, although the peasantry was perishing from lack of land and the weight of the landlords' yoke. As to its labour policy, the Russian bourgeoisie outstripped even the tsar in its hatred of the working class, for it not only strove to preserve and strengthen the yoke of the factory owners, but to render it intolerable by wholesale lockouts.

"It is not surprising that the people saw no essential difference between the policy of the tsar and the policy of the bourgeoisie, and that they transferred their hatred of the tsar to the Provisional Government of the bourgeoisie.

"As long as the compromising Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties possessed a certain amount of influence among the people, the bourgeoisie could use them as a screen and preserve its power. But after the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had exposed themselves as agents of the imperialist bourgeoisie, thus forfeiting their influence among the people, the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government were left without a support.

"2) The October Revolution was headed by so revolutionary a class as the working class of Russia, a class which had been steeled in battle, which had in a short space passed through two revolutions, and which by the eve of the third revolution had won recognition as the leader of the people in the struggle for peace, land, liberty and Socialism. If the revolution had not had a leader like the working class of Russia, a leader that had earned the confidence of the people, there would have been no alliance between the workers and peasants, and without such an alliance the victory of the October Revolution would have been impossible.

"3) The working class of Russia had so effective an ally in the revolution as the poor peasantry, which comprised the overwhelming majority of the peasant population. The experience of eight months of revolution—which may unhesitatingly be compared to the experience of several decades of 'normal' development—had not been in vain as far as the mass of the labouring peasants were concerned. During this period they had had the opportunity to test all the parties of Russia in practice and convince themselves that neither the Constitutional-Democrats nor the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks would seriously quarrel with the landlords or sacrifice themselves for the interests of the peasants; that there was only one party in Russia—the Bolshevik Party—which was in no way connected with the landlords and which was prepared to crush the latter in order to satisfy the needs of the peasants. This served as a solid basis for the alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. The existence of this alliance between the working class and the poor peasantry determined the conduct of the middle peasants, who had long been vacillating and only on the eve of the October uprising wholeheartedly swung over towards the revolution and joined forces with the poor peasants.

"It goes without saying that without this alliance the October Revolution could not have been victorious.

"4) The working class was headed by a party so tried and tested in political battles as the Bolshevik Party. Only a party like the Bolshevik Party, courageous enough to lead the people in decisive attack, and cautious enough to steer clear of all the submerged rocks in its path to the goal, could so skilfully merge into one common revolutionary torrent such diverse revolutionary movements as the general democratic movement for peace, the peasant democratic movement

for the seizure of the landed estates, the movement of the oppressed nationalities for national liberation and national equality, and the socialist movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Undoubtedly, the merging of these diverse revolutionary streams into one common powerful revolutionary torrent decided the fate of capitalism in Russia.

"5) The October Revolution began at a time when the imperialist war was still at its height, when the principal bourgeois states were split into two hostile camps, and when, absorbed in mutual war and undermining each other's strength, they were unable to intervene effectively in 'Russian affairs' and actively to oppose the October Revolution.

"This undoubtedly did much to facilitate the victory of the October Socialist Revolution" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 212-214).

**The Significance of the October Revolution.** The Great October Socialist Revolution is of enormous significance in the history of mankind. It marked a radical turn from the old capitalist world to the new socialist world. It split the world into two opposite systems—the system of dying capitalism and the system of victorious and flourishing Socialism.

For the first time in history, the Great October Socialist Revolution razed to the ground the old state machinery of the exploiting classes and built in its place a new type of state—the Soviets, as the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

By depriving the bourgeoisie and the landlords of the means of production and converting the factories, the land, the railways and the banks into public property, the October Revolution put an end to the exploitation of the masses of the people, rid millions of workers of the horrors of unemployment, and millions of peasants from bondage to the landlords and gradual extinction.

The victory achieved in the establishment of Soviet power gave the people, for the first time in history, not only freedom, but also the possibility of assuring their material well-being, the opportunity to lead a happy, prosperous and cultured life.

The Great October Socialist Revolution brought freedom, for the first time in world history, to the oppressed nations and converted them into free and equal builders of Socialism. Thus it indicated to the enslaved colonial peoples the way to fight for their emancipation.

Before the October Revolution our country was in danger of becoming the prey of the predatory imperialists and of being reduced to the position of a dependent colonial country. The victory of the socialist revolution saved Russia from the danger of losing her independence as a state.

The emancipated workers and peasants and liberated nationalities inhabiting Russia became the arbiters of their own destiny. The Soviets rendered it possible for the widest masses of the people to take an active part in affairs of state. Proletarian democracy, which safeguards the vital interests of the majority of the people, was firmly established.

The Great October Socialist Revolution is a colossal triumph for the theory of Marxism-Leninism, and proved that when revolutionary theory takes hold of the masses it becomes a mighty factor in the development of society.

Comrade Stalin wrote: "... The *victory* of the October Revolution signifies a radical change in the history of mankind, a radical change in the historical destiny of world capitalism, a radical change in the liberation movement of the world proletariat, a radical change in the methods of struggle and the forms of organization, in the life and traditions, in the culture and ideology of the exploited masses throughout the world" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 198).

## Chapter IX

# THE BREST-LITOVSK PEACE. THE STRUGGLE FOR A RESPITE

## 38. THE BREST-LITOVSK PEACE

**The Struggle to Extricate Russia from the Imperialist War.** One of the most important tasks that confronted the young Soviet State was to extricate the country from the imperialist war and to conclude peace.

The Decree on Peace of October 26 (November 8), 1917, called on all the governments and peoples to terminate the war and conclude a just and democratic peace.

The governments of the Entente countries rejected the Soviet government's proposal. They wanted at all costs to keep the Russian troops on the Eastern Front until the United States, which had entered the war against Germany, had transported her troops to Europe.

Kaiser Germany agreed to enter into peace negotiations in the hope of easing her military and food situation. On November 20 (December 3), 1917, peace negotiations were opened in Brest-Litovsk. At the conference, the Soviet delegation read out the Decree on Peace and proposed the conclusion of peace without annexations and indemnities. The German delegation accepted this proposal, stipulat-

ing, however, that peace without annexations and indemnities would only be possible if the Entente countries agreed to it. The Entente countries rejected the Soviet proposals. But when the Soviet delegation asked the Germans how far they would retire, General Hoffmann answered cynically: "Not a single millimetre." The Soviet delegation suspended negotiations for a week and returned to Petrograd. Lenin proposed that the negotiations be resumed in a neutral country, but the German imperialists rejected this proposal and presented predatory peace terms which included the surrender to Germany of the Moon Sound Islands, the Gulf of Riga and the city of Riga, and also Poland, Lithuania and the parts of Latvia and Byelorussia which the Germans had captured during the war. The Soviet delegation protested against these terms, broke off negotiations and returned to Petrograd again.

The Soviet government was faced with the alternative of concluding peace with Kaiser Germany on the latter's predatory terms or of resuming the war. But the newly established Soviet Republic was not in a condition to fight. A process of spontaneous demobilization was taking place at the front. The soldiers were making for home. The old army was breaking up, but no new army had yet been formed. Utterly worn out by the war, the masses of the working people were longing for peace and were unable to wage another war. On January 8 (21), 1918, at a joint meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party and the Bolshevik delegates at the Third Congress of Soviets, Lenin read out his theses concerning the immediate conclusion of a separate peace with Germany. In his theses he showed that the Soviet Republic was not in a condition to continue the war. It would be sheer recklessness, he said, to make the fate of socialist Russia dependent on the possibility of an early revolution taking place in Germany at a date when nobody could foretell. The conclusion of peace, said Lenin, would not weaken but strengthen the Soviet Republic, for it would give the Soviet government a respite which it could utilize to strengthen the defences of the country and consolidate the power of the Soviets.

**The Struggle Against the Trotsky-Bukharin Instigators of War.** In its struggle for peace the Bolshevik Party had to overcome the furious resistance of the numerous enemies of Soviet power.

The Russian and foreign bourgeoisie and their servitors, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, wanted to drag the unarmed Soviet Republic into a war with Germany in order to overthrow the rule of the Soviets. This aim was also pursued by the enemies of Socialism and traitors to their country, the Trotskyites and Bukharinites, who were supported by the double-dealers Kamenev and Zinoviev. Concealing his treacherous designs, Trotsky, who was the head of the Soviet delegation in Brest-Litovsk, conducted the negotiations in

such a way as to lead to a rupture. A delegation from the Ukrainian Rada also arrived in Brest-Litovsk claiming to represent an independent government, although by that time the Rada had been driven out by the insurgent masses of the Ukraine. Trotsky recognized the competence of the "independent" Rada, and the German imperialists concluded a treaty with it, behind the backs of the Soviet delegation, on terms that meant the enslavement of the Ukraine. Having secured the support of the betrayers of the Ukrainian people the German Kaiser's government sharply changed its tone towards the Soviet delegation and presented an ultimatum demanding the acceptance of its predatory terms.

In defiance of Lenin's instructions to conclude peace without delay, Trotsky refused to sign the peace terms proposed by Germany, but at the same time declared that the Soviet Republic would not wage war and would demobilize her army. The German imperialists could not wish for anything better. The Land of Soviets was in mortal danger, but Bukharin and Trotsky continued with their provocative assertion that "the Germans will not dare to attack."

Lenin categorically insisted that the acceptance of the peace terms be telegraphed to Germany and in this he was supported by Stalin and Sverdlov. On February 18, while the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was in session, a communication was received to the effect that at noon that day the Germans had launched an offensive along the whole front. The Central Committee adopted Lenin's proposal to conclude peace with Germany forthwith, but the German imperialists were in no hurry to conclude peace as they wanted to seize as much Russian territory and war supplies as possible. They hurled against the Land of Soviets thirty divisions of infantry, cavalry and armoured cars. Some of the German divisions marched through Latvia and Estonia to Narva and threatened Petrograd, while others occupied Dvinsk and marched on Pskov in order to reach Petrograd from the southwest. By arrangement with the Ukrainian Rada, Austrian and German troops began at the same time to occupy the Ukraine.

On February 21, 1918, Lenin proclaimed the socialist fatherland in danger. The Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. issued an appeal to the entire working population to rally to the defence of the socialist fatherland against the invasion of the German aggressors, whose aim was to enslave the workers and peasants and restore the capitalist system. Red Army detachments were formed in all parts of the Soviet land.

At Pskov and Narva the German army encountered the heroic resistance of the first units of the young Red Army.

While organizing the defence of the country amidst extremely difficult conditions, Lenin and Stalin called upon the working class

of Petrograd to be vigilant and to wage a ruthless struggle against enemies who were trying to organize a revolt in Petrograd and to capture the capital. The German army's offensive was halted. February 23, the day on which the Red Army repulsed the troops of German imperialism has since then been celebrated in the U.S.S.R. as Red Army Day.

On March 3, 1918, the Soviet delegation signed the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the terms of which were even more harsh than those which Germany had proposed at the beginning of the negotiations. By this treaty Soviet Russia withdrew from Finland, Lithuania, Latvia and part of Byelorussia. It had to conclude peace with the Ukrainian Central Rada, demobilize the army and navy and pay Germany an enormous indemnity. At this time Turkey seized Kars and Batum.

The act of provocation committed by Trotsky and Bukharin jeopardized the very existence of the Soviet Republic. As Lenin wrote, the Trotskyites and Bukharinites "actually *helped* the German imperialists and *hindered* the growth and development of the revolution in Germany" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 287). The German imperialists gained control of a vast territory covering almost a million square kilometres, equal in area to that of Germany and France put together. Over forty million Ukrainians, Letts, Estonians, Byelorussians and Lithuanians found themselves under the heel of German imperialism.

**Ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.** Another fierce struggle flared up over the question of ratifying the peace treaty. The Trotsky and Bukharin gang of warmongers entered into a conspiracy with the Right and "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries and organized a counter-revolutionary plot with the object of preventing the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, of overthrowing the Soviet government and of arresting and killing Lenin, Stalin and Sverdlov. This monstrous plot was uncovered only twenty years later.

The Seventh Congress of the Party (March 6-8, 1918) denounced the subversive and disruptive activities of the "Left Communists" and ratified the peace treaty that had been signed in Brest-Litovsk.

On March 14, the Extraordinary Fourth Congress of Soviets was convened to ratify the peace treaty. At this congress the Mensheviks and the Right and "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries formed a united front against Lenin. They were supported by the Trotskyites and Bukharinites. However, the enemies of Soviet rule sustained another defeat. The Congress of Soviets approved the policy of gaining a respite, ratified the peace treaty and called upon the working people to mobilize all forces to defend their socialist fatherland and strengthen its defences.



In view of the military threat resulting from the invasion of the Baltic countries and Finland begun by the German imperialists, the congress resolved to transfer the seat of government from Petrograd to Moscow, which thus became the capital.

### 39. THE STRUGGLE OF THE SOVIET PEOPLES AGAINST THE GERMAN OCCUPATION FORCES IN 1918

**The Fight Against the German Invaders in the Ukraine.** According to the terms of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty Germany was to cease hostilities against Soviet Russia; but the German imperialists, having concluded a separate peace treaty with the Central Rada, sent as many as 300,000 Austrian and German soldiers to the Ukraine and the Don Region. The German invaders needed the Ukraine for its rich resources of raw materials and food. They counted on crossing the Ukraine so as to reach the Donetz coal fields, and on crossing the Don and Kuban to reach Transcaucasia and the oil fields of Baku. German imperialism particularly needed to seize the Ukraine as a base from which to war against the Soviet regime, to dismember the Land of Soviets.

In an article he wrote on March 14, 1918, entitled "The Ukrainian Knot," Comrade Stalin wrote of the mortal danger that threatened Soviet Ukraine and called on the Ukrainian people to wage a patriotic war for liberation against the German invaders. "The imperialists of Austria and Germany," he wrote, "are carrying on their bayonets a new shameful yoke which is not one whit better than the old Tatar yoke—such is the significance of the invasion from the West. Evidently this is felt by the Ukrainian people who are feverishly preparing to offer resistance. The formation of a peasant army, the mobilization of the Workers' Red Guard, a number of successful clashes with the "civilized" violators after the first flashes of panic, the recapture of Bakhmach, Konotop and Nejin, and the approach to Kiev, the evergrowing enthusiasm of the masses who are rushing in thousands into the battle against the enslavers—such is the response of the people of the Ukraine to the invasion of the violators.

"Against the foreign yoke that is coming from the West, Soviet Ukraine is rising to wage a patriotic war of liberation—such is the significance of the events that are developing in the Ukraine" (J. Stalin, *Articles and Speeches on the Ukraine*, Kiev, 1936, Russ. ed., pp. 40-41).

On February 22, 1918, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Ukraine issued an appeal to the people to fight the German invaders. The appeal read: "Organize partisan units, blow up bridges, railways and roads; if you are forced to retreat, carry off or destroy grain stocks and everything that may be useful to the hungry robber hordes. . . Let the violators know that they will meet with deter-

mined resistance everywhere along their path. Let them know that only over our dead bodies will they enter the capital of the Ukraine."

In Kiev and other cities Defence Committees and Emergency Defence Staffs were formed. The weak Red Guard units doggedly resisted the powerful armoured forces of the German army and held them at bay near Kiev for three whole days, but it was an unequal battle, and on March 1 Kiev fell to the Germans. The German army marched on to Kharkov and the Donetz Basin in one direction, and to the industrial centres of South Ukraine in another.

Along their entire line of advance—from the frontiers furthest west to the northern frontiers of the Ukraine, on the borders of the Voronezh and Kursk Gubernias, and in the East, on the borders of the Don Region—the Austrian and German troops encountered the determined armed resistance of the Ukrainian workers and peasants who were backed by the fraternal Russian people.

The foreign invaders were fought by detachments of the Red Guards consisting of workers from all the industrial centres of the Ukraine. Gradually, the numerous Red Guard detachments were formed into five Ukrainian armies. The Central Executive Committees of the Ukraine, the Donetz-Krivoi Rog Soviet Republic, which had been formed in the Donetz Basin, the Don and Crimea Soviet Republics resolved to combine their forces to wage a joint struggle against the German imperialists. Red Guard detachments from Moscow, Petrograd and other big Russian towns were sent to assist the Ukraine.

The resistance to the German invaders in the Ukraine was organized by K. E. Voroshilov, who at that time was one of the leaders of the Ukrainian Bolsheviks. With the assistance of the veteran Bolshevik Artyom (Sergeyev), Voroshilov united a number of partisan detachments and formed the Fifth Ukrainian Army. When the Germans had seized the Ukraine he determined to fight his way through to Tsaritsyn to unite with the Red Army. For six weeks the Fifth Ukrainian Army fought its way forward through the Cossack Don Region. When the column reached the Cossack stanitsa of Chirskaya it was found that the Whiteguards had blown up the bridge across the Don. Voroshilov ordered the bridge to be repaired. To do this it was necessary to fill the river bed at one point with sand, stones and earth, and build huge trestle supports of railway sleepers. When the comrade who proposed the plan was asked how much earth would be required to fill the river bed he said, pointing to a tall hill situated about two kilometres from the bank: "See that hill over there? It'll have to be dragged to the Don." They set to, and, under fire from the Cossacks, without carts or special implements to help them, carried the earth to the river in baskets. Somewhat later assistance arrived in the shape of the carts of peasants who were retreating with the partisans. The bridge was built and the army proceeded on its way to Tsaritsyn.

In the Ukraine the Central Rada, headed by Petliura, was reinstated in power, but shortly after, in April 1918, the Rada government was overthrown on the demand of the German authorities, and Pavel Skoropadsky, a big landlord and tsarist General, was proclaimed Hetman, or ruler, of the Ukraine.

The Germans established a colonial regime of plunder in the territory they occupied. The German military authorities possessed unlimited power in the Ukraine. Field courts-martial were set up everywhere which ordered the shooting of non-combatants on the slightest suspicion of sympathy with the Soviets. The Germans carried through the wholesale extermination of the population. Thousands upon thousands of workers and peasants were shot, hanged or sent to concentration camps. All the prisons were crammed. The inspector of the Petrakov Elementary School reported to the Ekaterinoslav Zemstvo administration the following: "Instruction in the school of which I am in charge has ceased because a punitive expedition hanged and shot several persons right outside the doors and windows of the school, leaving the bodies lying here for three days."

In many towns and villages the German military authorities put up the following warning: "For every German soldier who is killed or wounded the first ten Russian soldiers or inhabitants that are caught will be shot forthwith."

Trainloads of plundered property were sent from the Ukraine and the Don Region to Germany. The German invaders established a sanguinary regime of requisition and plunder. The peasants were robbed of their land, grain stocks, cattle, food stocks, farm implements and domestic furniture and utensils.

The German invaders wrecked the entire industry of the Ukraine. They closed down factories and mills and transported the machinery to Germany. Unemployment was rampant in all the towns in the occupied territory. Famine and epidemics raged over this once bounteous land. Those who were employed were forced to work twelve to fourteen hours a day. The workers were driven from the apartments they had received under Soviet rule and compelled to live in cold and filthy barracks. Tens of thousands were forcibly driven to Germany to work in the coal mines or on the farms of the big landlords.

With the German troops came the Ukrainian, Polish and Russian landlords. The Hetman reintroduced forced labour for the peasants, compelling them to harvest the crops on the landlords' land. Punitive expeditions consisting of the sons of kulaks flogged and shot peasants on the reports of reactionary clergymen and kulaks. Heavy contributions were imposed on villages and towns. During the rule of the Hetman nearly 250,000 tons of grain and over 50,000 tons of sugar were transported to Germany, and during the whole period of German

occupation 37,000 carloads of provisions and goods of various kinds were taken out of the Ukraine. There were hundreds of thousands of unemployed in the Ukraine. Owing to starvation and epidemics the death rate increased enormously.

The Party led by Lenin and Stalin organized a people's war against the German invaders. Underground Bolshevik organizations were formed all over the Ukraine and insurgent Military Staff Headquarters and Revolutionary Committees were organized. The whole of the Ukrainian people—the miners of the Donetz Basin, the workers of Kharkov, Nikolayev and Odessa, and the peasants of the Kiev, Poltava and Chernigov Gubernias—rallied to defend their native Soviet land. Within a short space of time, in nearly all parts of the Ukraine, innumerable partisan detachments were formed, made up of factory workers, miners and village folk. The partisans made sudden raids upon enemy garrisons and captured arms. The Germans sent punitive detachments armed with artillery and machine guns against the partisans but the latter were not to be caught. Dislodged from one locality they appeared in another, and everywhere they received the assistance of the working people.

One of the famous heroes in this patriotic war against the German yoke in the Ukraine was Nikolai Shchors, the son of a Ukrainian railway worker. The partisans led by Shchors exterminated small German units engaged in plundering the peasants, and hindered in every way the movements of German troops. The Germans sent a large force against Shchors, but he retreated to the borders of Soviet Russia where he formed a regiment named after the Cossack Bogun, a comrade-in-arms of Bogdan Chmelnicki who fought for the liberation of the Ukraine in the seventeenth century. The Bogun Regiment commanded by Shchors covered itself with undying glory.

Insurrections broke out in different parts of the Ukraine. A popular movement flared up. In the towns strikes broke out. In July, a general railwaymen's strike was declared and the railways were brought to a standstill. The invaders crushed the strike with the utmost cruelty and sent many of its leaders to concentration camps in Germany. In spite of this, however, the workers' and peasants' movement against the German invaders continued to grow.

**The Fight Against the Germans in the Crimea.** In April 1918, the German imperialists invaded the Crimea with the object of entrenching themselves on the Black Sea coast. The well-armed German troops seized the Crimea, after meeting the feeble resistance offered by the newly formed Red Guard. The most stubborn and courageous resistance to the invaders was put up by the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet. To avoid falling into the hands of the German imperialists, who had occupied Sevastopol, the Soviet Black Sea Fleet retired to Novorossiisk—the centre of the Kuban-Black Sea Soviet Republic.

Claiming that it was so stipulated in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the German imperialists called for the surrender of the Black Sea Fleet. Lenin realized that the Kuban-Black Sea government would be unable to save the fleet, so he sent the Black Sea sailors the following secret order: "Sink the fleet. Don't surrender it to the enemies of the revolution." The revolutionary sailors obeyed Lenin's order. The torpedo boats sank, with the last signal flying at their mast-heads: "I perish but do not surrender." The battleship *Svobodnaya Rossiya* was sunk by three torpedoes fired at her by the revolutionary torpedo boat *Kerch*. In the morning of June 9, the *Kerch* herself sank after sending out her last radio message: "To all! To all! To all! I perish after sinking part of the Black Sea Fleet, which preferred death to shameful surrender." After sinking part of the fleet the Black Sea sailors went to the front, joining the ranks of the Red Army.

**The Fight Against the German Occupation Forces in Byelorussia.** The Austrian and German occupation forces reinstituted the rule of the landlords and the bourgeoisie in Byelorussia as well. On February 21, 1918, the Germans occupied Minsk. The Byelorussian Rada proclaimed the "independence" of Byelorussia, but at the same time it called upon the Byelorussian people to obey the German authorities in all things. The Rada also sent the German Kaiser Wilhelm II a telegram expressing their gratitude to him for liberating the country from the Bolsheviks. Shortly afterwards, however, the Germans appointed a "government" that suited their purposes better, namely, that of the counter-revolutionary landlord Skirmunt. The monarchist system was restored in all the towns and villages of the country and Byelorussia was proclaimed a German province. All power passed into the hands of the German militarists. All the towns were ruled by German commandants. The workers, peasants and working intelligentsia of Byelorussia were subjected to cruel oppression.

To fight the German invaders the Bolsheviks in Byelorussia organized a partisan movement.

In April 1918, a Congress of Soviets of the Western Region was convened in the Soviet part of Byelorussia. This congress elected an Executive Committee which took the lead of the mass revolutionary movement for the liberation of the workers and peasants of Byelorussia.

The whole of Byelorussia was covered by a dense network of partisan detachments. On March 15, 1918, one of these detachments suddenly attacked a Bavarian cavalry regiment that was stationed at Tsibulovo and completely wiped it out. In the beginning of September another large partisan detachment occupied the township of Gorval, in the Rechitsa Uyezd, Minsk Gubernia, and wiped out the German garrison. In the Rudobelsk Volost alone there were as many as 400 armed avengers of the people. In the villages of

Polesie there were nearly 500 partisans who were armed with machine guns and artillery.

Lenin and Stalin closely watched and directed the struggle of the people against the German invaders. In the spring of 1918, Nikolai Shchors, the organizer of the Ukrainian partisans, arrived in Moscow. He had been invited by Lenin to talk over matters. The partisans received Lenin's advice on how to fight the German invaders in the Ukraine. In June 1918, Lenin issued directives to extend the partisan movement and indicated the methods which should be employed in fighting the invaders. "Hamper the advance of the enemy in every way you can," he wrote. "Lay ambushes. Act with fire-arms and cold steel. Protect your rear. And for that purpose completely exterminate all spies, provocateurs, and counter-revolutionary traitors who render direct or indirect assistance to the enemy."

The Germans imagined that their march into the Land of Soviets, into the Ukraine and Byelorussia would be a mere walkover. Actually, however, the peoples of the Land of Soviets rose up to wage a general patriotic war which ended in the utter defeat of the German imperialists. Living in an atmosphere of universal contempt and constantly subjected to the blows of the partisans and the Red Army, the occupational forces deteriorated and lost their fighting efficiency.

### **The Fight Against the Occupation Forces in the Baltic Provinces.**

During the negotiations in Brest-Litovsk the Germans rejected the demand of the Soviet delegation that the Baltic peoples should be granted the right of self-determination, and on their part demanded that Russia should renounce the territory of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. After the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed the Baltic Provinces were occupied by German troops.

The Lithuanian Taryba, or National Council, sent an address to the German Kaiser expressing their loyalty and begging him to conclude a "perpetual alliance" with the Lithuanian state. In March 1918, Wilhelm II officially recognized the "independence" of Lithuania. Actually, however, Lithuania became completely subjected to the German authorities. Continuing to betray the national interests of the Lithuanian people, the Taryba, in July 1918, proclaimed Lithuania a monarchy, and it was only due to the universal discontent of the Lithuanian people that this proclamation was not put into force. A Lithuanian government headed by Voldemaras, leader of the reactionary "Tautin" party (the Lithuanian bourgeois-landlord nationalist party), was set up.

Forced labour for the benefit of the Germans was introduced. The Lithuanian peasants were obliged to work three days a week repairing roads and felling trees. In addition they were compelled to pay a land tax and numerous other taxes, including a heavy poll tax.

There were innumerable taxes, which the occupationists collected by force.

• The German authorities also tried to establish monarchist rule in Latvia. Hindenburg, the German Commander-in-Chief, issued an order that large tracts of land in the country should be set aside for German colonists and as a result the Latvian peasants were robbed of 50 per cent of their land for the benefit of German landlords and kulaks.

Soviet power was established in Estonia in October 1917, but it lasted only three and a half months.

In February 1918, the bourgeois republic was re-established in Estonia. The Germans tried to incorporate Estonia in the German state and proclaimed German the official language. All state posts were occupied by German nominees.

**The Part Played by the Germans in Suppressing the Revolution in Finland.** In January 1918, a workers' revolution commenced in Finland. A revolutionary government—the Council of People's Representatives—concluded a treaty of friendship with Soviet Russia. But there was no Communist Party in Finland at that time. The Council of People's Representatives, which was controlled by the Finnish Social-Democrats, allowed the bourgeoisie to retain their electoral rights and their capital.

Svinhuvud, the head of the overthrown bourgeois government, fled to Vasa, in the north of Finland, where he received from Sweden and Germany arms and money for a counter-revolutionary campaign against the revolutionary part of Finland. A counter-revolutionary "Black" brigade came from Sweden and a punitive corps came from Germany to assist the Whiteguard Finns.

The Finnish Red Guard numbered 70,000 men, but they were poorly armed, and notwithstanding their courage and heroism, suffered defeat from the Whiteguard Finns and the Germans.

The revolutionary proletarian government moved to Vyborg. On April 27, 1918, the Germans and Whiteguard Finns occupied Helsingfors, the capital of Finland. The interventionists had counted on capturing the Soviet Baltic Fleet which was anchored off Helsingfors, as the sea was then frozen and it seemed impossible for the fleet to get away. But, on orders from the Soviet government, the Dreadnoughts *Gangut*, *Poltava*, *Petropavlovsk* and *Sevastopol* and several cruisers, assisted by the icebreakers *Yermak* and *Volynets*, undertook the passage to Kronstadt, a heroic journey of several hundred kilometres through solid stretches of ice. Later, the remaining 160 vessels were brought away. The Soviet Baltic Fleet was saved by the heroism and class consciousness of the Soviet sailors.

The position of the Finnish revolution became hopeless. On May 12, 1918, the Whiteguard Finns occupied Vyborg, and then commenced

a reign of terror against the workers and Red Guards. About 17,000 revolutionary workers were shot and over 70,000 men and women were herded in concentration camps.

**Seizure of Bessarabia by Rumania.** Taking advantage of the difficulties the Soviet Republic was encountering, boyar-ruled Rumania, with the approval and assistance of the Entente imperialists, seized Bessarabia, which is inhabited by Moldavians, Ukrainians and Jews. As early as November 1917, a Sfatul Tsării, or Regional Council, was set up in Bessarabia which shortly afterwards proclaimed the formation of the Moldavian People's Republic and the decision to join the R.S.F.S.R. But on January 26, 1918, Rumanian troops captured Kishinev. Red Guard detachments fought the Rumanian invaders, but owing to the occupation of the Ukraine by German troops the Soviet units were obliged to retreat from Bessarabia. The leadership of the Sfatul Tsării fell into the hands of the agents of Rumania who secured the adoption of a decision incorporating Bessarabia in Rumania. In December 1918, in opposition to the will of the masses of the working people of Bessarabia, the Rumanian parliament ratified the incorporation of Bessarabia in the Kingdom of Rumania.

#### 40. THE BEGINNING OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

**Lenin's Plan for the Initial Steps in Socialist Construction.** While the working people of the Ukraine, the Crimea, Byelorussia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were fighting for their independence against the German troops in occupation of their territory, the Soviet government in Russia was mustering forces for the inevitable struggle against the German imperialists and for the liberation of the Soviet territories they had seized. At the same time the government of the R.S.F.S.R. strove to utilize the respite won by the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace for the transition to socialist construction. The Bolshevik Party utilized the respite to organize and strengthen the Soviet State and to build up a workers' and peasants' Red Army.

At a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee held on April 29, 1918, Lenin delivered a report on the immediate tasks of the Soviet government in which he urged that it was necessary to take advantage of the respite to start building the foundation of socialist economy, and submitted a plan of how this beginning should be made. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee ratified this plan.

By the spring of 1918, the proletariat was already in command of the key positions in the national economy, namely, the land, the big industrial plants, the railways and banks, the mercantile fleet and foreign trade. No less than 500 enterprises had been nationalized. In Lenin's opinion the main task of the proletarian dictatorship at that



time was to keep account of what was being produced and to ensure state control over the distribution of the finished product.

At that time agriculture in the Soviet Republic was conducted in 20,000,000 small, scattered, individual peasant farms. The petty proprietors in town and country recognized neither labour nor state discipline, refused to submit to either accounting or control and grew rich by profiteering and huckstering. As Lenin said: "The profiteer, the trade marauder, the disrupter of monopoly—these are our principal 'internal' enemies, the enemies of the economic enactments of the Soviet government" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1936, p. 362).

Lenin set the proletariat the task of creating a new Soviet labour discipline, of increasing the productivity of labour and of organizing socialist emulation. Lenin proposed that the services be enlisted of bourgeois specialists who should be made to serve the interests of the socialist state. At the meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee that was held on April 29, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries opposed this program of Lenin's and were supported by the Bukharinites, who, under cover of "Left" phrases, defended the kulaks, shirkers and profiteers.

After breaking down the resistance of the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship, the working class, in the summer of 1918, completed the expropriation of the big bourgeoisie. On June 28 of that year the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree for the nationalization of the whole of large-scale industry. The whole of the nationalized industry was placed under the control of the Supreme Council of National Economy.

**The Development of the Socialist Revolution in the Rural Districts.** In the spring of 1918, the counter-revolutionary kulaks rebelled against the socialist measures of the Soviet government. They refused to deliver grain at the prices fixed by the government and were the main cause of the starvation prevalent in the country. The workers of Moscow and Petrograd were getting only fifty grams of adulterated bread every other day. The demobilization of the army overloaded the railways, and this still further hindered the delivery of food to the towns. The food administration, which was controlled by officials and profiteers who were hostile to the Soviet regime, sabotaged the procurement of grain. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks took advantage of these food difficulties to conduct propaganda among the workers and peasants in favour of abolishing the state grain monopoly and of introducing free trade in grain.

On May 24, 1918, Lenin published an open letter to the Petrograd workers, entitled "The Famine," in which he called upon them, as the vanguard of the Russian proletariat, to organize a mass "crusade" against the grain profiteers, kulaks, parasites, disorganizers and bribe-

takers. "The famine is not due to the fact that there is no bread in Russia," he wrote, "but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against the Soviet government, on this most important and acute of questions, the question of bread" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 345).

Lenin explained to the workers that the fight for bread was a fight for Socialism and that it was necessary for them to go into the rural districts, organize the rural poor and take the grain from the kulaks in order that the workers and the army could be fed.

The Soviet government issued a series of decrees dealing with the struggle against the rural bourgeoisie who were hoarding or profiteering in grain. The decree issued in May 1918, for the formation of special workers' food detachments facilitated the task of the People's Commissariat of Food in procuring grain for the state. The Petrograd proletariat chose from its ranks about fifteen thousand of its most advanced members to be sent into the rural districts. Other industrial towns also sent food detachments, made up of their best workers. The food detachments relied on the rural poor in their operations in the rural districts.

On June 11, 1918, a decree was issued, on Lenin's recommendation, regarding the organization of committees of the village poor. The committees were given the responsibility of assisting the People's Commissariat of Food in requisitioning superfluous grain stocks and of redistributing the confiscated land, farm implements and cattle. As a result of these measures of the Soviet State, the village poor and the middle peasants secured additionally over 50,000,000 hectares of land held by the kulaks. The formation of these committees of the village poor marked a further stage in the development of the socialist revolution in the rural districts.

The Committees of the Poor Peasants organized the poorest strata of the peasantry and converted them into active builders of the Soviet system in the rural districts. They were also the medium for forming the Red Army. They explained to the working peasantry the measures adopted by the Soviet State and won the middle peasants over to its side. At first the middle peasants were suspicious of the Committees of the Poor Peasants, but when they became convinced that the Soviet State was helping the middle peasants, that the kulaks had been vanquished, they came over to the side of the Soviet State. This swing-over of the middle peasants enabled the Bolshevik Party, as early as the autumn of 1918, to raise the question of abolishing these Committees of the Poor Peasants and of establishing a firm alliance between the working class and the bulk of the middle peasants. All this ensured the further consolidation of the proletarian state.

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# MILITARY INTERVENTION THE CIVIL WAR

## *Chapter X*

### THE BEGINNING OF MILITARY INTERVENTION

#### 41. THE RESPITE ENDS

**The Part Played by International Imperialism in Organizing the Civil War.** In the summer of 1918, the work begun on the building of Socialism was halted by civil war. The civil war was fomented and directed by international imperialism, in alliance with the Russian landlords and the bourgeoisie, and with the active support of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and the Bukharinite and Trotskyite traitors.

The chief reason that prompted the foreign imperialists to intervene in Russia was their fear that the revolution would spread to Europe and their desire to prevent the building of a socialist state in Russia. They could not reconcile themselves to the loss of their big investments in Russia's large undertakings, and so insisted on intervention.

In December 1917, the French and British imperialists reached an agreement to divide Russia into "spheres of influence"; the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Donetz Basin were to constitute France's "sphere," and North Russia, the Caucasus, Transcaucasia and Central Asia were to be Great Britain's "sphere." Since the Entente imperialists were without frontiers contiguous with those of Soviet Russia and did not possess adequate military reserves, they were unable to commence intervention openly. To deceive the masses of the working people, they had to make it appear that the Russian people themselves were asking for the despatch of Entente troops to fight the Germans and the Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Trotskyites and Bukharinites acted as the accomplices and agents of the foreign imperialists and Russian landlords and capitalists in organizing the intervention.

Having joined in a conspiracy with the British imperialists, Trotsky and Bukharin exerted all efforts to hasten the resumption of hostili-

ties with Germany and thereby put an end to the hard-won respite. Trotsky sent his followers who were at the head of the Murmansk Soviet the treacherous instruction to permit a landing of British troops in Murmansk on the pretext that they were coming to fight the German imperialists. Lenin and Stalin categorically ordered the Chairman of the Murmansk Soviet to stop this shameful collaboration with the interventionists, and when the Murmansk traitors failed to obey this order they were proclaimed enemies of the people. Trotsky also facilitated the intervention of the Japanese imperialists in the Far East. At the end of March 1918, Trotsky, in conversation with the British representative in Moscow, told him that he had no objection to the landing of Japanese troops in Russia for the purpose, allegedly, of protecting the Siberian Railway. Several days later, on April 5, 1918, Japanese troops landed in Vladivostok. The Entente imperialists, however, were engaged in the world war, fighting decisive battles on the Western Front and therefore could not organize their intervention on a wide scale. Nor could Germany participate in this intervention of the Anglo-French-Japanese-American bloc because she was at war with this bloc. Nevertheless, Kaiser Wilhelm's government remained the bitterest enemy of Soviet Russia, and notwithstanding the peace treaty it had signed with Russia, supported her enemies and did all in its power to isolate, weaken and ruin the Land of Soviets. Under cover of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty it began openly to seize the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic countries.

**Conspiracies and Revolts Against the Soviet Regime.** When the counter-revolutionary Army General Headquarters were liquidated, the representatives of the foreign powers announced that they were leaving the Soviet Republic. They were, however, in no hurry to quit Russia, but established themselves in Vologda.

The Entente imperialists supported the bourgeois and landlord counter-revolution and supplied money and arms to all the underground organizations in Russia which were conspiring to overthrow the Soviet regime.

The counter-revolutionaries plotted to use as their armed force the Czechoslovak Corps which had been formed during the war of Czech and Slovak prisoners of war. The Soviet government had given this Corps permission to leave for France *via* Vladivostok provided it surrendered its arms and journeyed in small contingents.

On the way to Vladivostok large numbers of Russian officers and cadets joined the Corps, which numbered 60,000 men. The Czechoslovak contingents were strung out along the whole length of the railway from Penza to Vladivostok.

On May 25, 1918, the Czechoslovaks, supported by underground counter-revolutionary organizations, rose in revolt with the object of seizing Siberia, the Urals and the Volga Region. On June 8, 1918

they, with the assistance of Socialist-Revolutionaries, captured Samara and there set up a Whiteguard-Socialist-Revolutionary authority known as the Committee of the Constituent Assembly (Comuteh). A Whiteguard "government" headed by Socialist-Revolutionaries was also set up in Western Siberia.

The rule of the Socialist-Revolutionaries was exactly like that of the tsar. They annulled all the decrees of the Soviet State and returned the land and the crops taken from it to the landlords and the kulaks. Pre-revolution conditions were restored in the factories and strikes were prohibited. All supporters of Soviet rule were persecuted. The Committee of the Constituent Assembly sent from Samara to the East a "death train" containing 2,700 arrested Communists, workers and peasants, of whom 2,000 were shot or tortured to death. On the Volga and the Kama there were similar "death barges" on which hundreds of completely naked prisoners were starved, beaten and shot. Punitive expeditions roamed the countryside and pressed the peasants into the White army. The peasants were robbed of their land and cattle.

Meanwhile, Entente agents, jointly with Russian Whiteguards, were organizing revolts in twenty-three cities around Moscow, but they succeeded in carrying out a big revolt only in Yaroslavl. On July 6-8, 1918, the Whiteguards captured this town and subjected the workers to incredible torture; but on July 21, the Red Army liberated the town.

The Czechoslovak revolt was accompanied by a wave of kulak revolts, which everywhere were headed by Right-wing Socialist-Revolutionaries.

It was in this atmosphere of tense struggle that the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets opened on July 4, 1918. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries who were present at the congress demanded the annulment of the decrees on the Committees of the Poor Peasants and on the food detachments. The congress rejected these counter-revolutionary demands, whereupon the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries withdrew from the congress and began to organize a revolt against the Soviet regime. In secret complicity with the Bukharinites and Trotskyites they set themselves the object of provoking war with Germany, and to this end, on July 6, assassinated the German ambassador, Mirbach. The German government answered this act with the demand that the Soviet government should permit German troops to enter Moscow ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the German embassy. The Soviet government emphatically rejected this demand. Lenin declared that the entire Soviet people, young and old, would rise up to defend the Soviet capital if the German imperialists dared to send their troops against her.

During those days, so full of peril for the Republic, the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries, with the knowledge and approval of Trotsky and

Bukharin, raised a counter-revolutionary revolt in Moscow. The Congress of Soviets suspended its proceedings and declared that all the delegates were mobilized for the fight against the counter-revolution. Under Lenin's personal direction, the Soviet State vigorously crushed this reckless "Left" Socialist-Revolutionary adventure. The "Left" Socialist-Revolutionary party had conclusively become a counter-revolutionary bourgeois kulak party.

While these events were taking place, the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionary adventurer, ex-Colonel Muravyov, who was in command of the troops that were fighting the Czechoslovaks, tried to raise a revolt in Simbirsk, but thanks to the revolutionary vigilance of Comrade Kuibyshev, the adventurer's plot was speedily crushed.

The Czechoslovak revolt and the counter-revolutionary revolts of the kulaks and Socialist-Revolutionaries stimulated the activities of the monarchist counter-revolutionaries who placed their hopes on the last tsar, who, with his family, was at that time under arrest in Ekaterinburg. In view of this, the Ural Regional Soviet resolved, in the interests of the revolution, to do away with the ex-tsar and his family, and in July 1918, they were shot.

**The First Soviet Constitution.** On July 10, 1918, after the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionary plot in Moscow had been foiled, the Congress of Soviets adopted a Soviet Constitution (the Fundamental Law of the R.S.F.S.R.). This Constitution had been drafted by a commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee headed by Y. M. Sverdlov, with the assistance of Lenin and Stalin. The Constitution was based on the Declaration of Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People and on the "General Principles of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R." which had been drawn up by Comrade Stalin.

In the Constitution were recorded the first gains of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The Constitution set the aim of "guaranteeing the dictatorship of the proletariat with the object of suppressing the bourgeoisie, abolishing the exploitation of man by man, and of building Socialism." It declared that it was the duty of all citizens of the Soviet Republic to engage in useful labour and proclaimed the slogan: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." It further declared that it was the duty of all citizens of the republic to defend the socialist fatherland, but it granted the right to defend the revolution with arms only to the working people—the non-working elements of the population were only permitted to undertake service in the rear.

The Constitution deprived the exploiters and their defenders of political rights in the Soviet State. All those who exploited hired labour and lived on unearned incomes, and also monks and the clergy, as well as former gendarmes and policemen, were deprived of electoral rights.

The Constitution proclaimed the All-Russian Congress of Soviets as the supreme organ of state power in the R.S.F.S.R. The congress was to consist of representatives of City Soviets at the rate of one Deputy for every 25,000 voters, and of representatives of Gubernia Congresses of Soviets at the rate of one Deputy for every 125,000 inhabitants. The inequality in the representation of workers and peasants was a temporary measure necessitated by the fact that the individual peasant still lacked sufficient political consciousness, was poorly organized and needed the leadership of the proletariat. In the intervals between congresses the supreme authority was the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, elected by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

To administer and direct the country's economic and political life, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee set up a Soviet government known as the Council of People's Commissars.

The Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. that was adopted at the Fifth Congress of Soviets was the first genuinely democratic Constitution in the world, one that enabled the masses of the working people to take part in the administration of the state.

#### 42. THE DEFENCE OF TSARITSYN

**In A Ring of Fire.** At the end of 1918, the Soviet Republic was enclosed in a ring of fire.

The whole of the Middle Volga Region, the Urals and Siberia right up to the Far East, were occupied by the Czechoslovaks.

In the Far East the Japanese imperialists were in control, and assisted by the mercenary gangs of Semyonov and Kalmykov were preparing to seize the Maritime and Amur Regions.

In the North, which was occupied by British troops, a petty-bourgeois government consisting of ex-members of the Constituent Assembly was formed, but later this government was replaced by the open military-bourgeois dictatorship of General Miller.

In North Caucasus, the Whiteguard Volunteer Army commanded by General Denikin launched an offensive. In the Don Region, the Cossack Ataman Krasnov, who had fled to the Don after the Kerensky venture was crushed, established his rule with the aid of the German imperialists, who perfidiously violated the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty they had concluded with Russia.

The Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic countries were under the heel of the German imperialists, Transcaucasia was in the hands of the Turkish and German imperialists, and the Transcaspiian Region was in the hands of the British imperialists.

Soviet Russia, being surrounded by battle fronts, was cut off from her main food, raw material and fuel regions.

Lenin emphasized that now that the power of the landlords and capitalists had been overthrown, the workers and peasants would have to defend their native Soviet land against the imperialists and the counter-revolution. "Since November 7 (October 25), 1917," he said, "we have become defencists.... From that day on we stand for the defence of our Fatherland" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. XXII, Russ. ed., p. 291).

To defend Soviet Russia the formation of the workers' and peasants' Red Army was vigorously proceeded with.

At first the new army was an army of volunteers; only the most class-conscious and organized elements of the working classes were allowed to enlist.

During the first two months after the victory of the October Revolution 100,000 men voluntarily enlisted in the Red Army. In addition, the best organized revolutionary units of the old army and the local partisan detachments were incorporated in the Red Army. The staunchest and most class-conscious section of the Red Army was that made up of the proletarian Red Guards. An extremely important part in building the Red Army was played by the Military Commissars, who trained the new recruits politically and welded them together.

In May 1918, a decree was passed introducing compulsory military service for workers and peasants. In the autumn, Lenin called for the formation of an army 3,000,000 strong. On November 30, 1918, the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was set up. This Council, which was headed by Lenin, was in charge of providing replenishments for the Red Army and of supplying the front with arms and provisions.

**The First Siege of Tsaritsyn.** Cut off from the grain regions, the Ukraine, the Volga Region and Siberia, the Soviet Republic experienced severe starvation. The key to the grain regions of the Lower Volga and North Caucasus, which kept Soviet Russia supplied with bread, was Tsaritsyn. That city became the pivot of the struggle that was to decide the fate of the revolution. The counter-revolutionaries aimed to capture Tsaritsyn in order to link up the Czechoslovaks on the Eastern Front with Krasnov's forces on the Southern Front, and thus close the counter-revolutionary ring around Moscow. This would have cut off the Soviet Republic from vital sources of grain and oil, and would have isolated Baku and the Lower Volga from the central area of the country.

On Lenin's recommendation Comrade Stalin was sent to Tsaritsyn to organize food supplies. He arrived in Tsaritsyn on June 6 and found that the situation there was very bad. The Tsaritsyn Soviet was not operating the state grain monopoly, and the city and the adjacent villages teemed with profiteers, bagmen and bourgeois who had fled from Moscow and Petrograd. Saboteurs and spies were ensconced in



Soviet and military establishments. There was no strong revolutionary authority in the town. In a conversation Lenin had with Comrade Stalin over the direct wire at that time, he said: "As regards food I must say that nothing at all is being issued either in Petrograd or Moscow today. The situation is very bad. Inform me whether you can take urgent measures, because we have no other source of supplies except you." Comrade Stalin took determined measures against the speculators. Grain was secured, but with great difficulty, after overcoming the resistance of the kulaks, who had hidden away their grain stocks.

Comrade Stalin realized that not only the question of food supplies, but also that of the defence of the Soviet Republic was being settled at Tsaritsyn. He therefore took charge of the defence of the town.

On August 18, 1918, Tsaritsyn was surrounded on three sides by the forces of Krasnov. To aid the White Cossacks who were approaching, the counter-revolutionaries were preparing a revolt in the rear—in Astrakhan and in Tsaritsyn itself. In Tsaritsyn the revolt was organized by Socialist-Revolutionaries and by tsarist army officers who were hiding underground. At the head of the conspiracy was General Nosovich, sent there by Trotsky on military duties. The conspirators were supported by the foreign Consuls in Tsaritsyn. Comrade Stalin discovered this criminal plot in time and the Whiteguards and spies were arrested. In Astrakhan army officers who had been enlisted in the Red Army raised a mutiny and succeeded in capturing the fortress, arresting Communists, dispersing the Soviet and capturing the bank and the railway station. This Whiteguard mutiny was, however, suppressed the very next day.

At that time the Whiteguards launched an attack on Tsaritsyn. Although their forces considerably outnumbered the defenders of the city, they encountered very strong resistance. The defence of Tsaritsyn was directed by Comrade Stalin in person with the assistance of his close colleague, Comrade Voroshilov. They united the separate partisan detachments which arrived in Tsaritsyn from the Ukraine and the Don Region into regular units, and on Comrade Stalin's instructions all the available weapons, artillery in particular, were utilized for the defence. Armoured trains, united in a single combat group, often broke into the rear of the Whites. As Comrade Voroshilov has written: "Comrade Stalin directed the whole defence. His dynamic spirit, his energy and will, accomplished what had seemed impossible before his arrival. In a very short time divisions, brigades, regiments, staffs and supply departments sprang into being. The entire rear was thoroughly purged of counter-revolutionary and hostile elements. . . . Those were days of the utmost tension. Then was the time to see Comrade Stalin. As ever, calm, engrossed in his thoughts he

went without sleep literally for days on end, his intense activities divided between the theatres of operations and army headquarters" (K. E. Voroshilov, *Stalin and the Red Army*, 1938, Russ. ed., p. 18).

Meanwhile, work went on night and day in the factories and plants, where guns and machine guns were manufactured and armoured trains repaired. The entire population of the town was mobilized to dig trenches.

As a result of this heroic defence, by the end of August the White Cossacks were flung back from Tsaritsyn.

**The Attempt to Assassinate Lenin.** While the attacks of the Whiteguards were being repulsed at Tsaritsyn, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, in criminal conspiracy with the Trotskyites and Bukharinites, prepared to strike a mortal blow at the revolution by robbing it of its leader and organizer, V. I. Lenin.

In the evening of August 30, 1918, Lenin addressed a meeting at the Michelson Plant (now the Vladimir Ilyich Plant) at which he called upon the workers to rally for the fight against the Czechoslovaks. After the meeting, with workers crowding around him, he walked out into the factory yard to his car. Hiding behind the car, Fanny Kaplan, a Socialist-Revolutionary terrorist, lay in wait for him with a revolver. She fired three shots at Lenin and then tried to escape amidst the confusion, but the workers detained the would-be assassin.

The news of this attempt on the life of the beloved leader of the working people flashed throughout the country like lightning. Their hearts burning with indignation against the enemies of the people, the vast masses of the workers and peasants anxiously watched the bulletins that were issued about Lenin's condition. Thanks to his strong constitution Lenin recovered from his serious wounds, but his health was greatly undermined.

The unparalleled outrage committed by the Socialist-Revolutionaries roused among the masses of the people a feeling of the bitterest



J. V. Stalin in 1918

hatred towards the enemies of the revolution. On September 2, the Land of Soviets was proclaimed a military camp. Following a report by Y. M. Sverdlov on the attempted assassination of Lenin, the Soviet government took the decision to proclaim a mass Red terror in retaliation to the White terror of the bourgeoisie and its servitors, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Members of Whiteguard organizations and participants in revolts became liable to the penalty of death by shooting.

At this time the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission discovered a series of plots against the Soviet regime. In the beginning of September 1918, one of the biggest of these Whiteguard plots, directed by Lockhart, the head of the British Diplomatic Mission, in conjunction with the French Consul Grenard, was liquidated. They tried to bribe the Red Army men who were guarding the Kremlin, so as to get into the premises of the Council of People's Commissars and arrest the Soviet government. The plotters blew up bridges, disorganized the food supply in the capital and disrupted the Soviet administrative machinery. They wormed their way into the Red Army, stole military plans and conveyed them to the enemies of the Soviet regime. But all the enemies' plans went awry. The Red Army men whom they tried to bribe reported the matter to the Extraordinary Commission and helped the latter to capture the ringleaders of the conspiracy while they were at a secret meeting. The spies and plotters headed by Lockhart were arrested.

**The Rout of the Czechoslovaks.** The attempts of the enemies of the revolution to check the offensive which the Red Army had launched on the Eastern (Czechoslovak) Front failed. On August 1, before he was wounded, Lenin had sent a message to the commanding personnel of the Eastern Front in which he wrote: "Now the *entire* fate of the revolution is staked on *one* card: speedy victory over the Czechoslovaks on the Kazan-Ural-Samara Front. Everything depends upon that." The main forces of the Czechs and Whites were concentrated at Kazan, from where they launched an offensive against Sviyazhsk, the capture of which would have opened the road to Moscow. Lenin ordered the most reliable units to be sent to Sviyazhsk. Soon an army of 10,000 men was formed there. Lenin also ordered several torpedo boats from the Baltic Fleet to be sent to Sviyazhsk *via* the Volga, and in August the *Prytki*, *Retivy* and *Prochny* arrived, after travelling through the Mariinsky waterway. The torpedo boats broke into the Whiteguard lines and set fire to their steamers and barges. The arrival of the Baltic torpedo boats strengthened the Red Volga Flotilla which was commanded by the sailor Markin.

In the beginning of September the Red Army, supported by the Volga Flotilla, launched an attack upon Kazan. Several warships under the command of Markin sailed right up to Kazan and landed a force



The Defence of Tsaritsyn. *From a painting by Grekov*

of Red troops. On September 10, the city was captured and cleared of Whiteguards.

Lenin, who was now convalescent, sent the men of the Red Army a telegram congratulating them on their brilliant victory.

Two days later the Iron Division, which had been formed by V. V. Kuibyshev, captured Lenin's native city Simbirsk. The Red Army men sent Lenin the following telegram: "Dear Ilyich: The capture of your native Simbirsk is a reply to one of your wounds; the reply to the second will be the capture of Samara."

Lenin sent an answering message, addressed to Kuibyshev, in which he congratulated the men on their victory and thanked them on behalf of all the working people.

On learning of the villainous attempt to assassinate Lenin, the defenders of Tsaritsyn struck blows at the enemy with renewed energy. On September 7, Comrade Stalin sent Lenin a telegram informing him that the enemy had been routed and hurled across the Don, that the position of Tsaritsyn was now secure, and that the offensive was continuing.

In the middle of September, Comrade Stalin was called to Moscow where he related to Lenin, who was now on the way to recovery, the story of the heroic defence of Tsaritsyn. Lenin and Stalin sent Comrade

Voroshilov the following message of greetings for the heroes of Tsaritsyn: "Hold aloft the Red banners, carry them forward fearlessly, ruthlessly root out the counter-revolutionary landlords, generals and kulaks and show the whole world that Socialist Russia is invincible."

The victorious Red Army continued the offensive through the whole of the Volga Region. The First Army marched on Syzran, while the Fourth Army, of which V. V. Kuibyshev was Political Commissar, marched on Samara. On October 7, 1918, Samara was liberated by the Red Army and the Volga Region was cleared of Czechs and Whiteguards.

**Second Defeat of the Enemy at Tsaritsyn.** After the Czechoslovaks were defeated, the Southern Front began to acquire decisive importance.

In September 1918, on Lenin's recommendation, a Revolutionary Military Council of the Southern Front was set up. J. V. Stalin was appointed chairman of the Council, and K. E. Voroshilov Commander of the Front. On September 22, 1918, Comrade Stalin returned to Tsaritsyn from Moscow. He foresaw that another international conspiracy against Soviet Russia was being hatched in the South and expected the Entente to order the Whiteguards to make another attempt to capture Tsaritsyn, this time from the southwest. Krasnov realized that German intervention was coming to an end and therefore appealed for assistance to his new masters, the British and French imperialists.

By October 1918, he had mustered against Tsaritsyn twelve cavalry and eight infantry divisions, well supplied and armed by the foreign imperialists. Tsaritsyn was completely surrounded and its position was extremely grave. Notwithstanding all the requests that were sent to him, Trotsky failed to send either reinforcements or ammunition. On Comrade Stalin's orders the production of shells was organized at the Ordnance Works in Tsaritsyn. As was the case during the first siege of the city, the entire population was mobilized for the front. Among those mobilized were the engineers of the survey party that was working on the Volga-Don Canal project. In reply to a request of the Tsaritsyn Soviet for the release of these engineers so that the survey should not be interrupted, Comrades Stalin and Voroshilov wrote: "We shall dig the canal after we have drowned the Cadets in the Volga and the Don."

The poorly-armed, ill-shod and badly-clothed Red Army defended Tsaritsyn with exceptional heroism. Stalin and Voroshilov remained in the frontline positions directing the attacks in person.

On October 15, the Whiteguards launched determined attacks in the endeavour to break through to Tsaritsyn, but encountered the indomitable resistance of its defenders. That day many of the defenders met the death of heroes, including the twenty-three-year-

old hero commander Nikolai Rudnyev. During the battle of Tsaritsyn splendid Red Army commanders came to the forefront, such as Parkhomenko, Budyonny, Timoshenko and others.

In October 1918, on the recommendation of Comrades Stalin and Voroshilov, the first Red mounted unit was formed under the command of Semyon Mikhailovich Budyonny. The son of a poor peasant in the Don Region, Budyonny as a youth experienced all the hardships of an agricultural labourer and later of a trooper in the tsar's cavalry. At the beginning of the Civil War he organized a mounted partisan unit in the Don Region and, like many partisan commanders, fought his way to Tsaritsyn to join the Red Army there. Here the separate mounted detachments were united in a cavalry regiment and later in the First Cavalry Division. Under the command of S. M. Budyonny, this Red Cavalry Division struck crushing blows at Krasnov's forces.

In October 1918, the second plan to capture Tsaritsyn was frustrated just as the first had been. On October 24, Comrade Stalin, who had been called back to Moscow after the White Cossacks were defeated, sent greetings to the defenders of Tsaritsyn in the name of the Soviet government.

**Denikin Captures North Caucasus.** While Krasnov, backed by the German imperialists, was surrounding Tsaritsyn, Denikin's Volunteer Army marched to his assistance from the South.

Denikin's aim was to cover Krasnov's Southern Front and defeat the Red Army in North Caucasus. The main Soviet forces, which had been mustered by Sergo Orjonikidze, were concentrated near Bataisk, under the command of a former officer of the old army named Sorokin, who turned out to be a traitor. Part of the troops were posted on the Taman Peninsula and part near Tikhoretskaya.

On the proposal of Sergo Orjonikidze, the Soviet Republics of North Caucasus—the Kuban, Black Sea, Stavropol and Terek Republics—decided to combine their forces for the struggle against the counter-revolution.

In the summer of 1918, the First Congress of Soviets of North Caucasus proclaimed the formation of a united North Caucasian Soviet Republic. Before, however, this republic had time to consolidate itself, Denikin launched an offensive with the object of cutting off Soviet North Caucasus from the Volga and of preventing the Caucasian Red Army from striking at Krasnov's forces from the South.

In June 1918, Denikin succeeded in cutting off North Caucasus from Tsaritsyn and marched against Tikhoretskaya, where a Red Army 30,000 strong was concentrated. Denikin had a force of 20,000 men, nearly all army officers, Cadets and upper-class Cossacks. This so-called Volunteer Army was well armed with artillery and armoured cars, which it had received through Krasnov from the

Germans. In the middle of July Denikin's forces captured Tikhoretskaya.

Denikin's successes encouraged the entire counter-revolution in North Caucasus.

Whiteguard revolts broke out in the Cossack stanitsas and in the towns. In August, as the result of Sorokin's treachery, Denikin's forces captured Ekaterinodar and pushed the Soviet main forces across the river Kuban. By capturing Ekaterinodar, the Whiteguards cut off the Red Army that was stationed on the Taman Peninsula. The Taman Red Army decided to fight its way along the coast to Novorossiisk and then through Tuapse to Armavir to join the main forces of the Caucasian Red Army. The column marched along the shore of the Black Sea and over the rocky heights of the Caucasian Mountains with no food and no water, under a blazing sun. With it retreated tens of thousands of refugees carrying their belongings. Women and children travelled on munition carts, sitting on cases filled with shells. There was continuous fighting all along the way. Clothing and footwear were worn to shreds. The only sustenance available was some corn and nuts. Near Tuapse the way—the only one available for the Soviet Taman forces—was barred by enemy forces. Bold spirits were chosen and these, sticking their bayonets and rifles in the fissures of the rock to serve as steps, climbed the steep rocky mountainside and attacked the enemy from the rear. The Whites retreated. The column went in pursuit and forced its way into Tuapse.

At the end of September 1918, after a march of 500 kilometres with fighting all the way, the column captured Armavir and effected a junction with the Red Army. This heroic march of the Taman forces is described in Serafimovich's novel *The Iron Flood*.

The units of the Caucasian Red Army were reorganized to form the Eleventh and Twelfth Armies of the Southern Front. Their position was one of great difficulty. They were cut off from Tsaritsyn, and Denikin's forces were advancing against them on three sides. In their rear were the steppes and the Astrakhan sandy wastes. There was no food, and typhus was rampant among them. The wounded received no medical assistance. The situation was made worse by the treachery of Sorokin, who in October rose in revolt and shot the leaders of the Bolshevik organization and of the Soviet government of North Caucasus. This greatly facilitated Denikin's task in capturing the whole of the Kuban.

At the same time Denikin's agents raised a revolt in the Terek Region. This revolt was organized by the Menshevik Bichorakhov, whose gangs surrounded Vladikavkaz, the centre of the Terek People's Republic. Sergo Orjonikidze hastened to the assistance of Vladikavkaz from Tsaritsyn. He broke through the enemy's lines, entered the city, organized its defence and with the aid of Caucasian highlanders

liberated the city. After this Bicherakhov's forces besieged Grozny. The workers of the Grozny oil fields, assisted by the highland poor led by that brave leader of the highlanders, Aslanbek Sheripov, staunchly defended the city and held out for three months until it was liberated by troops sent by Sergo Orjonikidze. To dislodge the Bicherakhov gangs who had fortified themselves in the Cossack stanitsa of Grosnenskaya, right close to the city, it was decided to burn down the stanitsa. The Red Army men bombarded the stanitsa with incendiary shells and bottles of kerosene and drove off the Whiteguards. The Terek remained a Soviet area; the rest of North Caucasus was occupied by Denikin's forces.

#### 43. THE ENTENTE ARMIES ATTACK SOVIET RUSSIA

**The Defeat of Germany and the Annulment of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.** The latter half of July 1918 marked a turning point in the World War in favour of the Entente. The strength of German imperialism was giving out. In October 1918, Austria sued for peace. In the same month Turkey capitulated. Germany's defeat at the front stimulated revolutionary unrest at home, and on November 9, 1918, this unrest culminated in a revolution. Kaiser Wilhelm II fled abroad and a bourgeois republic was established in Germany. Two days later, on November 11, 1918, an armistice was concluded on the Western Front. The World War ended in the defeat of Germany.

The defeat of Germany by the united forces of the Allies facilitated the struggle which the Soviet people were waging against the German imperialists. The German invaders began to be driven out at all points from Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic countries. On November 13, 1918, the Soviet government solemnly announced the annulment of the predatory Brest-Litovsk Treaty. This act marked a victory for Lenin's farseeing tactics on the question of peace. Harsh and degrading as the terms of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had been, they had nevertheless given the Soviet people a respite, during which the Soviet State consolidated its position, armed its forces and beat off all the attacks of the internal counter-revolution. The change in the international situation enabled the Soviet government to denounce the predatory peace treaty which had been forced upon it.

**The Intervention of the Entente Countries.** The defeat of Germany complicated the international situation. Describing this situation in the report he delivered at the Sixth All-Russian Congress of Soviets on November 8, 1918, Lenin said: "... While we have never been so near to an international revolution, never, on the other hand, has our position been so dangerous as it is now. The imperialists were engrossed with each other. But now the Anglo-Franco-American group



has swept away the other. They are making it their cardinal aim to stifle world Bolshevism, to destroy its chief seat, the Russian Soviet Republic" (V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII, New York, 1945, p. 284).

Indeed, the Entente imperialists were alarmed at the spread of the revolutionary movement in Western Europe and therefore decided to take advantage of Germany's defeat to wage a struggle against Soviet Russia, which they regarded as the hotbed of revolution. The Entente plan was to hurl their forces against Soviet Russia in conjunction with the counter-revolutionary forces which had begun to fight the Soviet regime immediately after the victory of the October Revolution. This general offensive was to start simultaneously in three directions. The British troops, supported by Denikin's forces were to occupy the Eastern regions of Russia, primarily the Transcaspiian Region and Baku. The French troops were to land in South Russia and to occupy the Ukraine with the assistance of the Ukrainian nationalists. The united forces of Great Britain and America were to launch an offensive in the North and move along the Northern Dvina to establish a junction with the Czechoslovak and Kolchak forces.

**British Intervention in the Transcaspiian Region and Baku.** This plan began to be put in operation as early as the summer of 1918, when the Soviet Republic was enclosed in a hostile ring and was holding at bay the Czechoslovaks, the German imperialists and the Russian Whiteguards.

The commander of the British forces in Persia struck a bargain with the bourgeois nationalists in Turkmenia and with the Russian Whiteguards, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in Central Asia, and with their aid, in July 1918, the Soviet regime was overthrown in Ashkhabad, Merv, Krasnovodsk and other Transcaspiian cities. Nine Ashkhabad Commissars were taken prisoner and shot. A Whiteguard government headed by Socialist-Revolutionaries was set up in Ashkhabad. The Transcaspiian Region was occupied by British troops. The Turkmen bourgeois nationalists and the Russian Whiteguards treacherously signed an agreement with the British interventionists which converted Turkmenia into a British colony.

After entrenching themselves in the Transcaspiian Region, the British imperialists made preparations to seize Baku. At that time the situation of the Baku Commune was one of great difficulty. It was being attacked by Turkish troops and by armed bands organized by the local nationalists, the Mussavatists. On the pretext of combating Turkish atrocities, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks of Baku entered into secret negotiations with British agents and then demanded that the Baku Soviet should call in the assistance of British troops. Comrade Stalin sent the Baku Bolsheviks categorical instructions not to permit

foreign troops to enter Baku under any circumstances. The Baku Council of People's Commissars, headed by Stepan Shumyan, took energetic measures for the defence of the Baku Commune.

There had been close co-operation between Soviet Russia and the Baku Commune; oil from Baku was sent to Soviet Russia *via* Astrakhan, and Soviet Russia sent Baku grain from its stocks in North Caucasus. But with the seizure of North Caucasus by Denikin's forces, the food situation in Baku became considerably worse. The enemy had cut off the Baku Commune not only from its grain supplies but even from its sources of drinking water. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries

took advantage of this grave situation to intensify their defeatist propaganda and on July 25, 1918, after a stormy session, they succeeded in getting the Baku Soviet to pass a resolution to invite British troops into the city. Several days later a counter-revolutionary government seized power in the city and called in the British troops. The twenty-six members of the Baku Council of People's Commissars tried to escape to Soviet Astrakhan, but the ships on which they travelled were fired at by the British and compelled to return to Baku. The People's Commissars were arrested and flung into prison.

The British remained in Baku only for a month. In September Turkish troops and detachments of Mussavatists surrounded the city. Just before the British left, the arrested Baku Commissars succeeded in escaping from prison and made another attempt to reach Astrakhan, but on the orders of the ship's captain the ship carrying the Baku Bolsheviks suddenly changed course and headed for Krasnovodsk, where the Commissars were arrested by the Transcaspien government. On September 20, 1918, they were taken to a point 207 kilometres from Krasnovodsk and brutally put to death.

The fall of the Baku Commune and the death of the twenty-six Baku Commissars had disastrous consequences for all the Transcaucasian Republics, for after this they long remained dependencies of the foreign imperialists.



N. A. Shchors



Jeanne Labourbe

**The Liberation of the Ukraine from the Foreign Interventionists.** Shortly after the annulment of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party commissioned Comrade Stalin, who had just returned from Tsaritsyn, to organize the struggle to liberate the Ukraine from the German invaders. In November 1918, Soviet rule was restored in the liberated part of the country and the Ukrainian Soviet government called upon the Ukrainian workers and peasants to overthrow Hetman Skoropadsky, the puppet of the Germans. The keynote of the struggle against the German invaders was "All power to the Soviets."

The Ukrainian Bolsheviks intensified their work of disintegrating the German army. The German soldiers began to demand that they be sent home at once, and to surrender their artillery and ammunition to the Red Army. Deprived of the support of the German troops, Hetman Skoropadsky lost all power. He fled from Kiev disguised as a German officer. Power in Kiev was seized by new enemies of the Ukrainian people—the bourgeois nationalists headed by Petliura. The Petliura government, known as the Directory, sought the support of the new interventionists. At this time the Entente commenced intervention. At the end of November 1918, two French and two Greek divisions were landed in the Ukraine. In all 50,000 Entente troops were landed in the South of Russia, together with large quantities of machine guns, artillery and shells intended for the White "governments" which were fighting against Soviet Russia.

The Petliura government signed a treaty with France by which it pledged itself to form an army of 30,000 men to fight the Bolsheviks and to place the entire economy of the Ukraine under France's control.

The indignant workers and toiling peasants rose in revolt against the betrayers of the Ukrainian people. The fraternal Red Army came from Soviet Russia to assist the revolutionary insurgents. On February 5, 1919, the Tarashchansky Regiment, commanded by Bozhenko, a carpenter employed in the Kiev Arsenal, and the Bogun Regiment commanded by Nikolai Shehorsk liberated Kiev. Soviet rule was restored over the greater part of the Ukraine. Only in the South, in Odessa, Nikolayev and Kherson, and in the Crimea, did Entente

troops, supported by Denikin's forces remain. Entente warships were still anchored in the ports.

The Bolshevik underground organizations in Odessa, Nikolayev, Kherson and Sevastopol conducted vigorous propaganda activities among the French soldiers and sailors, and in Odessa the underground Bolshevik organization formed a "foreign committee" in which an active part was taken by Jeanne Labourbe, a French woman Communist, who was ardently devoted to the revolution. Subsequently, Jeanne Labourbe was betrayed by an agent provocateur and was brutally put to death by the French imperialists.

Energetic work among the French forces was also conducted by the French revolutionary sailor André Marty, who organized a mutiny in the French fleet. The mutiny was suppressed and Marty was arrested. He was in danger of being executed, but the protests and revolutionary demonstrations of the French workers secured his release.

Lacking sufficient forces, the interventionists withdrew from Kherson and Nikolayev in March 1919, and concentrated in Odessa; but on April 6, 1919, the Red Army entered Odessa. On April 7, the Red Army, wading across the icy shallows of Sivash, occupied the Crimea.

The main reason for the speedy defeat of the British and French occupational forces in the South was the disintegration that rapidly spread through their ranks. Realizing that they had been deceived, the French soldiers refused to fight against Soviet Russia and said to their officers: "We haven't come here to fight."

In April 1919, the French government was obliged to withdraw its forces from all the Black Sea ports. On the eve of the departure of the French from Odessa the workers in that city rose in armed revolt and power passed to the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. Soviet rule was restored in the whole of the Ukraine and the Crimea.

**The Failure of the Entente Offensive in the North.** In Murmansk and Archangel, about 50,000 Entente troops were landed. The region was controlled by the British who appointed their puppet, General Miller, as Military Dictator. The interventionists shamelessly plundered the region, cut down forests and carried off furs. Everybody



André Marty

who was suspected of sympathizing with the Soviet regime was sent to penal servitude on remote uninhabited islands. Preparations were made to strike from the North at Moscow.

The British interventionist troops moved along the Northern Dvina to Kotlas, from where a railway ran to Vyatka. The Entente intended in the region of Kotlas-Perm to effect a junction between the forces of the northern counter-revolution and the Czech and Kolchak forces. The Whiteguard units, which were formed with the aid of British instructors and were well supplied with British armoured trains, aircraft, artillery and machine guns, outnumbered the Red Army which was operating on the Northern and Eastern Fronts by three to one. Five divisions under the command of the Czech General Gaida surrounded the Third Red Army in the region of Perm (now the city of Molotov) and inflicted grave defeat upon it. In December Gaida's forces occupied Perm and marched on to Vyatka (now the city of Kirov). From Vyatka there was a straight road to Moscow.

Comrades Stalin and Dzerzhinsky were sent to the Eastern Front to save the situation. Their instructions were to ascertain the causes of the disaster and to propose measures for its elimination. Comrade Stalin found the Eastern Front in a state of utter disorganization. The tsarist generals whom Trotsky had appointed violated the Soviet government's instructions to recruit the Red Army only from among the working classes of the population. The army teemed with sons of kulaks and the bourgeoisie and downright spies who were demoralizing the Red forces. There was no communication between the front and the rear, and numerous spies and saboteurs were at work at staff headquarters and in the administrative services. General Headquarters had no definite plan of campaign and issued contradictory orders, which only served to demoralize the army. Comrade Stalin drove enemies out of headquarters, established order in the army administrations, organized the formation of regiments in conformity with the Soviet government's instructions and took measures to clean up the rear. Above all, Comrade Stalin issued an order to hold Vyatka at all costs so as to prevent the Entente forces in the North from linking up with Kolchak's forces and the Czechoslovaks who were advancing from the East. As a result of all these measures Vyatka was held and the Entente troops failed to join forces with the Czechoslovaks.

Enormous assistance was rendered the Red Army in the North by ski-runners of the Komi people, who proved to be splendid scouts and dispatch carriers. Dressed in white coveralls and moving very swiftly, they out-witted the enemy.

An active part in the struggle against the invaders in both the North and South was played by women and juveniles, who obtained information about the enemy's operations and intentions, supplied the partisans with food and arms and distributed Bolshevik leaflets.

Disintegration set in among the Entente forces in the North just as it did in the South. This was facilitated considerably by the Bolshevik propaganda that was carried on among them by means of leaflets which were posted up on trees and scattered wherever the foreign troops were stationed. The result of this propaganda was that the Entente soldiers refused to fight against the Bolsheviks and demanded that they be sent home. The Entente's attempt to destroy the Soviet regime with the aid of their own forces failed. As Lenin wrote: "The victory we gained . . . was the greatest victory we have gained over the Entente. We have deprived it of its soldiers" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1936, p. 54).

**The Liberation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia from the German Invaders.** The defeat of Germany gave an impetus to the struggle of all the Baltic peoples against the German invaders. The expulsion of the Germans was accompanied by mass revolts against the local bourgeoisie who had betrayed the people and had entered into a deal with the invaders.

In Lithuania, after the expulsion of the Germans, the workers set up Soviets which organized revolts against the bourgeois government of Voldemaras. The preparations for these revolts were directed by the Communist Party of Lithuania and Byelorussia that was formed at that time. The Voldemaras government fled from Vilna, and in December 1918 the Vilna Soviet proclaimed the formation of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. On December 23, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee recognized the independence of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic and issued a decree to incorporate the Kovno and Vilna Gubernias in Soviet Lithuania.

In November 1918, the advancing Red Army compelled the German troops to retire from Latvia too. The various bourgeois parties in Latvia feared that the proletarian revolution would be victorious in that country and in the endeavour to prevent this they set up in Riga a National Council, which, on November 18, 1918, proclaimed the formation of a Latvian bourgeois republic. A provisional bourgeois government was set up headed by Ulmanis, the leader of the Farmers' Union. This government concluded an agreement with the German Social-Democratic government, by which the latter undertook to send "volunteers" to Latvia. Roused to indignation by this act, the masses of the people of Latvia rose in revolt and captured Riga. The bourgeois government fled to Libau. In January 1919, a Congress of Latvian Soviets was held which proclaimed the formation of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Latvian Soviet state authorities formed a Red Army, abolished the private ownership of land, confiscated state, landlord and church lands and expelled the landlords from the country.

In the spring of 1919, the Latvian bourgeois government which had established itself in Libau sent an army of 80,000 men against Riga

and captured the city. At that time Soviet Russia was surrounded by enemies and was unable to render the Latvian Soviet Republic military assistance, and so a bourgeois republic was established in Latvia.

In Estonia, after the German troops left, the bourgeoisie appealed for assistance to Great Britain, and the latter sent a squadron of warships to assist the Estonian counter-revolution. The working people of Estonia rose in revolt and with the assistance of the advancing Red Army expelled the invaders. On November 30, 1918, Soviet rule was restored in the shape of the Estonian Working People's Commune. The Estonian bourgeoisie again appealed to Great Britain and also to their neighbour, White Finland, for assistance. The well-armed forces of the White Estonians, White Finns and the British forces compelled the Red Army to withdraw from Estonia and the Soviet regime was again abolished.

**The Liberation of Byelorussia and the Formation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.** By December 1918, the Byelorussian workers and peasants, assisted by the Red Army, had cleared their country of German troops. The part of Byelorussia which the Germans had occupied during the imperialist war was also liberated. The working people of Byelorussia appealed to Lenin and Stalin to help them form a Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. In December 1918, the First Congress of the Communist Party of Byelorussia was held and resolved to proclaim an independent Socialist Byelorussian Republic consisting of the Minsk, Grodno, Mogilev, Vitebsk and Smolensk Gubernias. The congress declared: "The working people of Byelorussia wish to know no other power except the power of the Soviets, which is the power of the workers, agricultural labourers and peasants. The power of the landlord Byelorussian Rada is hateful to them."

On February 2, 1919, the First All-Byelorussian Congress of Soviets was held in Minsk, which made the arrangements for the formation of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. All the land of the landlords, monasteries and churches was proclaimed public property, the railways and factories were nationalized, and the Soviet laws were proclaimed in force. Y. M. Sverdlov, Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, who was present at the congress, announced the decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to recognize the independence of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and promised that it would be rendered fraternal assistance. In his speech he said: "The Russian proletariat will never forget that you were the first to meet the blows and the onslaught of German imperialism and check its advance into the interior of our country."

The congress proclaimed the formation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, ordered the opening of negotiations with

the R.S.F.S.R. with the object of establishing federal ties, and appealed to all the independent Soviet Republics to follow the example of the B.S.S.R.

**The Fight Against the Polish Invaders in Lithuania and Byelorussia.** From the very first days of their existence the young Soviet Republics of Lithuania and Byelorussia were attacked by gentry-ridden Poland, which had become the faithful agent of the Entente. Poland was indebted for her independence to the October Socialist Revolution, but the Polish capitalists and landlords were filled with mortal hatred of Soviet Russia, for the revolution had deprived them of vast estates and capital invested in the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Lithuania. Hence, notwithstanding the repeated peace offers of the Soviet government, gentry-ridden Poland broke off diplomatic relations with Russia and with the assistance of the Entente moved her troops to the frontiers of Soviet Lithuania and Soviet Byelorussia.

The Congresses of Soviets of Lithuania and Byelorussia decided to unite their forces against the White Poles and at a joint meeting of the Central Executive Committees of the Lithuanian and Byelorussian Republics a government for the united Lithuanian-Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic was formed.

The government of the R.S.F.S.R. rendered the young Soviet Republics all the assistance it could. Y. M. Sverdlov sent them men with experience in Soviet and Party work, and Lenin and Stalin helped them to form a Red Army for the purpose of combating the White Poles.

In the spring of 1919, the White Poles launched an offensive and in April they captured Vilna, the capital of Lithuania.

The government of the R.S.F.S.R. sent units of the Red Army to Byelorussia to assist the fraternal Soviet Republics of Lithuania and Byelorussia. In June 1919, Sergo Orjonikidze, then a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Sixteenth Army, was sent to the Western Front, where he organized the resistance to the White Poles. The Red Army entrenched itself on the river Berezina.

In the parts of Lithuania and Byelorussia they captured, the Polish invaders restored private property and returned the factories to the capitalists and the land to the landlords. Scores of villages were burned to the ground and the peasants were robbed of their grain and cattle.

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party the workers and peasants of Byelorussia organized partisan detachments which operated in the rear of the White Poles and also in the frontline areas. In conjunction with the Red Army, these detachments waged a determined struggle against the Polish aggressors for the freedom and independence of their country.



## Chapter XI

# DEFEAT OF THE THREE ENTENTE CAMPAIGNS

### 44. THE DEFEAT OF KOLCHAK

The Entente's Plans in the Spring of 1919. After defeating Germany and her allies, the Entente concentrated all its attention on the struggle against the Soviet Republic. By the spring of 1919, the preparations for an offensive by Kolchak's forces on the Eastern Front were completed. An army of nearly 300,000 men marched across the Urals with the object of reaching Moscow, its rear "covered" by British, French, American, Japanese and Czechoslovak detachments. Interventionist forces totalling over 100,000 men helped Kolchak in his campaign against the Soviets. The Whiteguard detachments under the command of Yudenich, jointly with White Estonian and White Finnish forces, and with the active assistance of a British naval force, were to march against Petrograd. Denikin, together with the Don and Kuban Cossack armies under his command, was to move up from the South. General Miller was making preparations for an offensive from the North. In the Ukraine, Whiteguard and Entente agents were preparing counter-revolutionary revolts of the bandit Hetman Grigoryev. In Central Asia an attack was to be launched by the British invaders, supported by the Basmachi. Such were the far-reaching plans for the Entente's first campaign. As Stalin said: "This was a combined campaign, for it provided for a simultaneous attack by Kolchak, Denikin, Poland, Yudenich and the joint Anglo-Russian detachments in Turkestan and in Archangel, the pivot of the campaign being in Kolchak's region" (J. Stalin, *Speeches and Articles on the Ukraine*, Kiev, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 90).

The Organization of Resistance to the Entente. On March 18, 1919, the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was opened. This congress showed that the Central Committee led by Lenin was indeed a "militant organ of a militant party in the period of the Civil War."

The main item on the agenda of this congress was the question of the attitude to be adopted towards the middle peasants. As a result of the victory of the October Revolution there were more middle peasants in the rural districts than before the revolution. They constituted the majority of the peasant population, but in the early part of 1918 still wavered between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Taking advantage of these waverings the Whiteguards succeeded in temporarily overthrowing Soviet rule in the Volga and other regions. Bitter experience, however, soon taught the middle peasants that the victory of the Whites meant the restoration of the rule of the land-



J. V. Stalin, V. I. Lenin and M. I. Kalinin in 1919

lords. In and following the autumn of 1918, the middle peasants swung over to the Soviet regime. This explains why Lenin at that time advanced the watchword: "Know how to reach agreement with the middle peasant, while not for a moment renouncing the struggle against the kulak, and relying solidly and solely on the poor peasant. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII, Moscow, 1934, Russ. ed., p. 294.)

After hearing Lenin's report the congress passed a resolution demanding that a strict distinction be drawn between the middle peasants and the kulaks and that close attention should be paid to the needs of the middle peasants. The congress adopted the policy of establishing a firm alliance with the middle peasants, and of relying upon the poor peasants, while preserving the leading role of the proletariat in this alliance.

Some of the army delegates at this congress formed what was called the "military opposition," which was headed by the defeated group of former "Left Communists." This opposition tried to drag the Party back to partisan methods of warfare, opposed the employment of military experts in the Red Army, etc. The congress devoted a great deal of attention to the task of building up the Red Army. Lenin and Stalin strongly attacked this "military opposition." Comrade Stalin said: "Either we create a real worker and peasant—primarily a peasant—strictly-disciplined army, and defend the Republic, or we perish."

The congress also strongly censured Trotsky for staffing the central establishments of the Red Army with elements clearly hostile to Soviet rule and for cramping in every way the activities of the Communists, and particularly of the Political Commissars, in the army. The congress passed a resolution calling for the strengthening of the Red Army, and issued a special appeal to the workers and peasants, warning them of the impending war danger and of the campaign being prepared by the Entente.

On March 18, 1919, on the day the Eighth Congress of the Party was opened, proletarian Moscow saw to his last resting place Y. M. Sverdlov, the Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, "the first man in the first Soviet Socialist Republic," "the first of the organizers of the broad masses of the proletariat," as Lenin said of him. In his intense efforts to build up the Soviet State, Y. M. Sverdlov knew no rest. During one of his tours of the country he caught cold, fell seriously ill and died. The death of Sverdlov was a severe loss to the Party and to the Soviet State.

On March 30, 1919, on Lenin's recommendation, M. I. Kalinin was elected Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Originally a Tver peasant, and later a highly skilled metal worker employed in St. Petersburg, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin was an outstanding example of one who combined in his revolutionary activities the revolutionary struggle of the Russian worker and of the Russian peasant. Lenin said the following:

"It is very difficult to find a real substitute for Comrade Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov. If we can find a comrade who combines experience of life and knowledge of the life of the middle peasant we shall solve this problem, and I think that the nomination you have read in the newspapers today satisfies all these conditions. The nomination is that of Comrade Kalinin" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., pp. 188-189).

**Kolchak's Regime in Siberia.** In the spring of 1919, the bulk of the armed forces of the foreign interventionists were compelled to leave the Land of Soviets, but they left the Russian Whiteguards their artillery, tanks and aircraft. The imperialists of the Entente had not abandoned intervention, they had merely entrusted this task to their puppets, the Russian Whiteguards. First among these was Admiral Kolchak, whom the British, French and American imperialists lavishly supplied with arms, army clothing, provisions and money. The people at that time noted Kolchak's complete dependence upon his foreign masters even in ditties such as the following:

*Uniform British,  
Epaulettes from France,  
Japanese tobacco,  
Kolchak leads the dance.*

Kolchak established a military monarchist dictatorship and restored the tsarist regime in Siberia. The Siberian peasants, who had never known landlordism, were reduced almost to the condition of serfs. Their grain and cattle were requisitioned, levies were imposed upon them, and they were compelled to pay not only arrears in taxes, but also taxes several years ahead. For the slightest display of resistance they were subjected to public flogging. Kolchak was exceptionally cruel in his treatment of the workers and Bolsheviks and had them shot without mercy.

Proclaiming the slogan "Russia, united and indivisible," Kolchak cruelly suppressed movements for national liberation. He refused to recognize the national autonomy of a single people inhabiting the territory he occupied. He even refused to recognize the Bashkir counter-revolutionary government headed by Validov, in spite of the fact that the latter served him faithfully. The discontented masses of the Bashkir people compelled Validov to appeal for assistance to the Soviet government.

To stimulate the formation of a united front of the working people against Kolchak and to expose the counter-revolutionary manoeuvres of the Bashkir nationalists, Lenin and Stalin sent a telegram to the Revolutionary Committee in Ufa confirming the autonomy of Bashkiria and granting an amnesty to the Bashkir government headed by Validov. In March 1919, a decree of the Soviet government was issued, signed by Lenin and Stalin, concerning the formation of the Autonomous Soviet Bashkir Republic. The working people of Bashkiria enrolled in the Red Army to fight Kolchak, but the bourgeois nationalists continued to play their double game, merely waiting for the opportunity to overthrow the Soviet regime in Bashkiria.

**Kolchak's Offensive and Defeat.** In the beginning of 1919, Kolchak launched an offensive along the whole of the Eastern Front. In the northern direction (Perm-Vyatka), Kolchak's Siberian Army continued operations against the Third Red Army, but thanks to the resolute operations of Comrades Stalin and Dzerzhinsky the Siberian Army's advance was checked at Glazov. In March and the early part of April, 1919, Kolchak's Western Army captured Ufa, Bugulma and Buguruslan and threatened Simbirsk and Samara. Kolchak's middle group of troops which connected the Siberian and Western Armies, threatened Kazan. Finally, south of Ufa, and further towards Turkestan, the White Cossack armies of Dutov and Tolstoy threatened Orenburg and Uralsk. Kolchak's offensive assumed threatening proportions and created the danger that the Eastern and Southern counter-revolutionary forces would link up. Kolchak planned to effect a junction with Denikin in the region of Saratov in order to form a single front for an advance against Moscow. At that time Denikin had captured a part of the Donetz Basin. Yudenich launched an offensive against Petrograd.

The country was in grave peril; swift and determined measures had to be taken to defeat Kolchak.

On April 12, the "Theses of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in connection with the situation on the Eastern Front," drafted by Lenin, were published in *Pravda*. In this document Lenin emphasized: "All our energies must be bent to the extreme to smash Kolchak" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 467). The Party issued the slogan: "Everything for the Eastern Front!"

In response to the appeal of the Party and of Lenin, Moscow and Petrograd sent one-fifth of their Communists and one-tenth of their trade union members to the front. The Young Communist League sent several thousand of the best of the youth to the Eastern Front. Volunteers were enlisted in every town. In the rear women took the places of the men who went off to the front.

The task of organizing the defeat of Kolchak was entrusted to M. V. Frunze, who was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Group of the Eastern Front, and to V. V. Kuibyshev, who was appointed a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Eastern Front. During the Civil War, the veteran Bolshevik Mikhail Vassilyevich Frunze developed into a splendid proletarian military leader. As early as the autumn of 1918, he was sent as Commander of the Fourth Army to strengthen the Eastern Front. Backed by the textile workers who came to his assistance, Frunze quickly restored revolutionary order in the army and launched a successful offensive, first against the White Cossacks and then against Kolchak. In the fighting against Dutov, the White Cossacks and Kolchak, V. V. Kuibyshev was always with Frunze in the frontline positions wherever the fighting was hottest. Frunze and Kuibyshev trained a number of splendid proletarian army commanders and political workers. One of such commanders and heroes was V. I. Chapayev, around whose name legends have been woven.

Vassili Ivanovich Chapayev was born in Chuvashia. As a boy he helped his father and grandfather who travelled from village to village on the Volga doing carpentry jobs. As a youth he suffered the severe barrack-discipline of the tsarist army and spent the best years of his life at the front during the imperialist war. The hardships he endured roused in his heart a burning hatred for the oppressors and exploiters. After the February revolution he returned to the Volga, joined the Bolshevik Party, and from the very first days of the October Revolution plunged into the struggle to establish and consolidate the power of the Soviets.

At the end of April 1919, the Southern Group of the Red Army, which Frunze had formed with the assistance of his close colleagues

Kuibyshev and Chapayev, launched a general offensive. In the beginning of May, the 25th Division, commanded by Chapayev, fought successful battles at Buzuluk and Buguruslan. On May 13, the Red Army captured Bugulma and the White armies retreated towards Ufa. At this crucial moment Trotsky treacherously proposed that the Red Army's offensive against Ufa should be halted and that part of the troops should be transferred from the Eastern Front to the Southern Front. Had this proposal been carried out, the Urals, with its industrial plants, would have remained under Kolchak's control, and this would have enabled him to recover from his defeat. Frunze strongly opposed Trotsky's order and was supported by Lenin, who demanded that the Urals should be liberated before the winter set in.



M. V. Frunze

Under Frunze's leadership the Red Army forced the river Belaya and battled for Ufa.

Chapayev's division repulsed the counter-attacks of Kolchak's picked corps commanded by Kappel, and after fierce fighting the Red troops captured Ufa. Kolchak's army rapidly retreated eastward. The Red Army pursued the retreating Kolchak forces and reached the foothills of the Urals. On July 13, it captured Zlatoust, thus opening the road into Siberia, and on July 14, Ekaterinburg (now Sverdlovsk).

Meanwhile, fierce guerilla warfare was waged in Kolchak's rear by partisan detachments composed of workers and peasants from the Urals and Siberia. At the same time, the Red Army commenced offensive operations against Kolchak's allies, the White Cossacks.

Chapayev's 25th Division was transferred to the Ural Front, and there fought its way forwards to the relief of Uralsk, which had been heroically holding its besiegers at bay for the past two months. Chapayev liberated Uralsk and drove the White Cossacks towards

the Caspian Sea. On September 5, 1919, his headquarters in the stanitsa of Lbishchenskaya was surrounded by White Cossacks who had broken through from the rear. Finding himself surrounded by the enemy, Chapayev fought his way to the river Ural into which he plunged, but he was wounded while in the water, and was drowned. The image of Chapayev is engraved in the hearts of the Soviet people forever.

The Red Army had dealt Kolchak a shattering blow, but he still retained some of his forces and tried to put up resistance. In August, Lenin published "A Letter to the Workers and Peasants in Connection with the Victory over Kolchak," in which he warned that "the enemy is still far from being destroyed. He has not even been definitely broken. Every effort must be made to drive Kolchak and the Japanese and the other alien marauders out of Siberia. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 518.)

At this juncture Denikin in the South, and Yudenich in the West, went into action in support of Kolchak.

**The Fight for Astrakhan.** After capturing North Caucasus, Denikin made a drive for the Volga in order to join forces with Kolchak. At that time a stronghold of the revolution which protected the mouth of the Volga against the Whiteguards and prevented Kolchak and Denikin from effecting a junction was Astrakhan. The defence of the city was organized by S. M. Kirov, who had arrived there in January 1919. The situation in Astrakhan was one of great difficulty. The armed forces available were few. After a heroic march through the waterless Astrakhan steppe, the remnants of the Eleventh Army arrived, but nearly the whole force was sick with typhus. Typhus and scurvy were rampant in the city itself. The inhabitants were starving. The counter-revolutionaries openly conducted anti-Soviet propaganda. There were few industrial workers in the city. The city was beset on all sides by the enemy, Kolchak's troops and White Cossacks moving from the East and Denikin's forces from the West. Warships of the British interventionists were almost at the mouth of the Volga.

Kirov set up a Revolutionary Military Committee and established revolutionary order. The Revolutionary Military Committee issued the warning: "Bandits and marauders will be shot on the spot." The saboteurs were told: "He who does not wish to work shall not eat. Available provisions will be issued only to those who work for Soviet Russia."

Help came to Astrakhan in the shape of the Volga Flotilla which the Bolsheviks of Nizhni Novgorod, under the direction of L. M. Kaganovich, had in the spring of 1918, formed out of river steamers and cutters covered with armour plate and mounted with guns. To reinforce the Volga Flotilla Lenin sent several light torpedo



Chapayev Leading a Charge. *From a painting by P. Vassilyev*

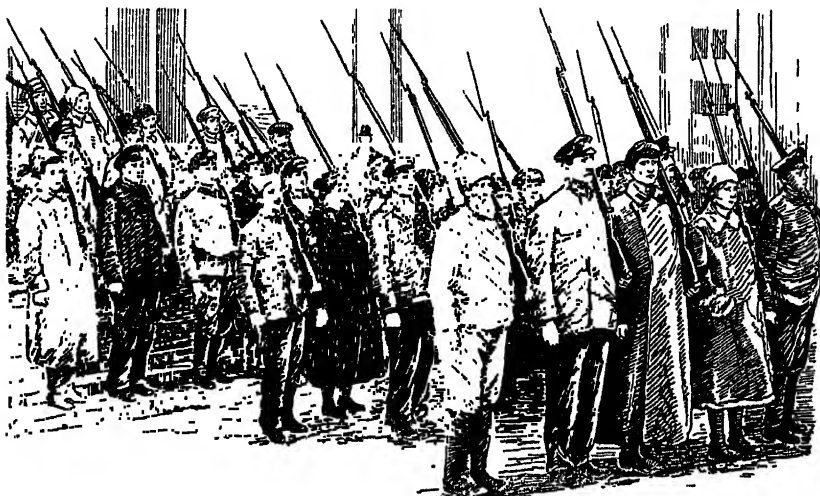
boats from Kronstadt *via* the canals of the Mariinsky system. Under Kirov's personal direction, the combined flotilla, numbering about forty vessels, crossed the dangerous shallows to the Caspian Sea where the British were in control. By a sudden raid Kirov captured the radio station by which Denikin maintained communication with Kolchak, and from Denikin's reports he learned that one of Denikin's generals had been sent to Kolchak with the plans of future operations. This general was captured together with the plans.

Fierce fighting raged around Astrakhan. Kirov mobilized all forces to resist the enemy. At a conference of Party members that was held on August 3, 1919, he said: "*As long as there is a single Communist left in the Astrakhan Region the mouth of the Volga will always remain Soviet.*" At this juncture Trotsky sent an order from General Headquarters to evacuate Astrakhan for the purpose of "straightening out the front." Kirov appealed directly to Lenin and urged that Astrakhan must be held at all costs. Lenin sent the following reply: "Defend Astrakhan to the last." Kirov carried out Lenin's order.



**The Defeat of Yudenich near Petrograd.** To assist Kolchak the imperialists, in the spring of 1919, organized an offensive against Petrograd under the command of General Yudenich, who was supported by White Finns, White Estonians and a British naval squadron. The Red Army's forces near Petrograd had been weakened by the transfer of its best units to other fronts. A British spy was organizing a large-scale military plot in Petrograd. In his service were former army officers serving as military experts in the Red Army, and they seized the Kronstadt forts of Krasnaya Gorka and Seraya Loshad. Spies and conspirators were busy at Red Army Headquarters in Petrograd. The foreign diplomatic missions had stocks of machine guns, grenades and bombs to be used in the counter-revolutionary revolt that was to take place in Petrograd. Zinoviev and his supporters were spreading panic and consternation. Yudenich's forces were approaching Petrograd.

The Party sent to the Petrograd Front that tried organizer of victory, Comrade Stalin. He conducted a drive against spies, and ordered the Red Baltic Fleet to capture the mutinous forts from the sea. In spite of the assurances given to Comrade Stalin by military experts that this operation was doomed to failure, the gallant sailors of the cruiser *Oleg* and the battleships *Petropavlovsk* and *Andrei Pervozvanny* braved the guns on the forts, drove close in and subjected them to a heavy bombardment. On June 16, Stalin's order was carried out. Krasnaya Gorka was cleared of mutineers. This fort was renamed Krasnoflotski (Red Fleet) in honour of the gallant Red Navy men who



Ready to March off to Defend Petrograd Against Yudenich

captured it. Seraya Loshad also surrendered and was subsequently renamed Peredovoi (Advanced).

The British squadron came to Yudenich's assistance. It attempted to attack Kronstadt, but it met with heroic resistance.

The Red forces began to push back the Whites all along the line. Stalin reported to Lenin that the offensive was proceeding successfully and that the Whites were in flight. In August 1919, Yudenich's army was defeated and its remnants retreated to Estonia.

#### 45. THE DEFEAT OF DENIKIN

**Denikin Launches an Offensive.** The defeat of Kolchak did not discourage the leaders of the Entente. They prepared a "campaign of fourteen countries" against Soviet Russia, to begin in the autumn of 1919. Apart from the Entente countries, Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Transcaucasian bourgeois governments and the Whiteguard forces in Russia and in the Ukraine were to be included in the campaign. But the governments of the border (limitrophe) bourgeois states did not trust the tsarist generals who dreamed of restoring "Russia, united and indivisible." The contradictions within the camp of the bourgeoisie, and above all the resistance offered by the Red Army, resulted in the campaign falling through. The Entente concentrated all its attention on assisting General Denikin, their last hope in the struggle against Soviet Russia. Thus was prepared the Entente's second campaign.

As Comrade Stalin wrote: "The Entente's *second campaign* was launched in the autumn of 1919. This was also a combined campaign, for it involved a simultaneous attack by Denikin, Poland and Yudenich (Kolchak had been struck out of account). This time the pivot of the campaign is the South, in Denikin's region" (J. Stalin, *Articles and Speeches on the Ukraine*, Kiev, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 91).

On July 3, Denikin ordered an offensive on Moscow. His forces advanced in three columns: one, under the command of Wrangel moved along the line of the Volga; the centre was formed by the army of the Don, and the left flank was formed of Denikin's picked troops, the so-called Volunteer Army. To hasten the capture of Moscow, Denikin sent into action a cavalry force under the command of Mamontov. It operated in the rear of the Red armies of the Southern Front, and raided the towns of Tambov, Kozlov and Elets. On October 6, the Whites captured Voronezh. On October 13, Denikin captured Orel and marched on Tula. At this juncture Yudenich launched another offensive against Petrograd.

The landlords and capitalists felt certain that the fall of Moscow was only a matter of days. The capitalists of the Donetz Region offered

a prize of a million rubles to the first Denikin regiment to enter Moscow. One of Denikin's armoured trains bore a destination plate with the inscription: "To Moscow."

In the regions occupied by Denikin's forces the workers and peasants were subjected to a reign of bloody terror. The Donetz coal fields ran with proletarian blood. The people called the Volunteer Army the "Robber Army." As Kolchak had done in Siberia, Denikin in the areas he occupied returned the land to the landlords, restored the rule of the landlords and capitalists and re-established the monarchical regime. In the Ukraine the Ukrainian language was banned. The highland villages in North Caucasus were wiped off the face of the earth: Daghestan was proclaimed a part of "Russia, united and indivisible." In all the occupied regions the Volunteer Army was able to maintain itself only by means of ruthless terrorism.

**Victory Over Denikin.** On July 9, 1919, Lenin issued an appeal to the workers and peasants entitled "Everything for the Fight Against Denikin" in which he wrote: "The Soviet Republic . . . must become a *single military camp*, not in word but in deed. All the work of all institutions must be adapted to the war and placed on a military footing!"

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet government, the Land of Soviets exerted all efforts to defeat Denikin.

During the summer and autumn of that year the Party conducted "Party weeks" during which 200,000 new members joined its ranks, and these were forthwith sent to the front and to the sectors where the constructive work of the Soviets had to face the greatest obstacles. The Young Communist League displayed supreme devotion to the revolution. Often there were notices on the doors of the Y. C. L. premises stating: "The Committee is closed down. Everybody has gone to the front."

The Central Committee of the Party entrusted the task of organizing the defeat of Denikin to Comrade Stalin. After studying the situation on the Southern Front, Comrade Stalin rejected Trotsky's treacherous plan to conduct the offensive against Denikin by way of Tsaritsyn-Novorossiisk. In a letter to Lenin, Comrade Stalin wrote:

"It is therefore necessary right away, without loss of time, to alter the old plan, which experience has already discredited, and replace it by a plan according to which the main attack will be launched on Rostov—by way of Kharkov and the Donetz Basin:

"Firstly, here we shall be in surroundings which are not hostile, but on the contrary sympathetic to us, a circumstance which will facilitate our advance.

"Secondly, we shall secure an extremely important railway system (that of the Donetz Basin and the main artery feeding Denikin's army—the Voronezh-Rostov line. . . .)



J. V. Stalin Greets the 'First Cavalry Army. *From a painting by Avilov*

"Thirdly, by this advance we will cut Denikin's army in two. One part, the Volunteer Army, we shall leave for Makhno to devour, while the other, the Cossack army, we shall threaten with an attack in the rear.

"Fourthly, we shall be in a position to set the Cossacks quarrelling with Denikin, who, if our advance is successful, will try to move the Cossack units to the West, to which the majority of the Cossacks will not agree. . . .

"Fifthly, we shall secure coal, while Denikin will be left without coal" (K. E. Voroshilov, *Stalin and the Red Army*, Moscow, 1942, p. 23).

Lenin approved of Stalin's plan and conceded his demand that Trotsky should not be allowed to have any say in the affairs of the Southern Front.

To carry out Stalin's plan a special group of shock troops was formed and placed under the command of Stalin's colleague, Sergo Orjonikidze. An extremely important place in the plan was assigned to the operations of Budyonny's cavalry.

Operating in conformity with Stalin's plan, the Red troops, on October 20, 1919, liberated Orel from the Whites. On October 24, Budyonny's Cavalry Corps, which had only just defeated Denikin's cavalry under the command of Mamontov, liberated Voronezh by

a heroic surprise attack whose audacity and precipitation stunned the Whites. In this operation the Red cavalry were supported by a detachment of Voronezh workers and railwaymen under the command of L. M. Kaganovich. Budyonny inflicted another defeat on the White cavalry at Kastornaya. During these battles the Soviet cavalry grew and became firmly welded. In November, on Comrade Stalin's recommendation, the First Cavalry Army was formed. S. M. Budyonny was appointed commander of this army, and K. E. Voroshilov a member of its Revolutionary Military Council.

The Cavalry Army never sustained defeat. Nearly all its commanders came from the ranks of the workers and peasants and had led the partisan struggle against the Whiteguards. The First Cavalry Army produced many valiant heroes, such as Morozov, Parkhomenko, Dundich, and others.

Meanwhile, partisan units were active in Denikin's rear in the Ukraine. This partisan movement was led by the Bolshevik underground organizations and was assisted by the peasants, who gave the partisans concealment when necessary.

The atrocities that Denikin's hordes committed roused the hatred of the peasants and swept them into the ranks of the fighters for the power of the Soviets. In the village of Golubovka, in the Ekaterinoslav Gubernia, for example, the Whites captured a partisan, cut a five-pointed star on his breast and then cut out his heart. The effect of this atrocity was to bring 300 additional peasants from the villages in the neighbourhood of Golubovka into the partisan struggle against the Whites. Numerous cases of a similar kind occurred.

The Young Communist League also played a heroic part in the underground struggle against Denikin. The young Soviet heroes displayed no less courage and fortitude under torture in the dungeons of Denikin's counter-intelligence department than was displayed by the adult workers and peasants. There was the case, for example, of the nine members of the Young Communist League of Odessa, one of whom, Dora Lubarskaya, wrote as follows in the letter she sent to her comrades just before her death: "Dear Comrades, I shall die as honestly as I have lived during my short life. Only now do I really feel like a conscious revolutionary and Party worker. How I behaved under arrest, and when I was sentenced, my comrades will tell you. They say I behaved like a brick. All of us, the condemned, are behaving well, we are cheerful. . . . Soon, very soon, the whole of the Ukraine will breathe freely and real constructive work will commence. I am only sorry that I shall not be able to take part in it."

The revolt of the workers and peasants against the Whites spread far and wide in all the districts occupied by Denikin's forces.

After sustaining defeat at Orel, Kastornaya and Voronezh, Denikin's army rapidly retreated southwards to the Black Sea ports. In

the beginning of January 1920, the First Cavalry Army, tireless in pursuit of the Whites, occupied Rostov-on-Don, and on March 27, 1920, Novorossiisk, the Whites' last stronghold on the Black Sea coast, fell. The second campaign of the Entente, who had organized Denikin's offensive, was defeated as thoroughly as the first had been. In his "Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine in Connection with the Victories over Denikin," Lenin wrote: "Denikin must be vanquished and destroyed, and such incursions as his not allowed to recur. That is to the fundamental interest of both the Great-Russian and the Ukrainian workers and peasants. The fight will be a long and hard one, for the capitalists of the whole world are helping Denikin and will help Denikins of every kind" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol II, Moscow, 1947, p. 551).

The organizer of the Red Army's victory over Denikin was J. V. Stalin.

In November 1919 the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, in recognition of Comrade Stalin's tremendous services on the different fronts during the Civil War, conferred upon him the country's highest award—the Order of the Red Banner.

**The Rout of Yudenich.** At the time when Denikin was at the height of success Yudenich launched another attack upon Petrograd. The Whiteguards were supplied with tanks by the British, and the entire West-European press confidently prophesied the early capture of Petrograd. Lenin sent the workers of Petrograd an order not to surrender the capital. The Communists and Young Communist Leaguers of Petrograd were mobilized to defend the city. Women and



Fortification Against Yudenich at top of Prospect October 25, Petrograd

old men went to the front. Whole workers' families went out to dig trenches. The factories worked day and night producing materials for the city's defence. The workers themselves unearthed traitors and spies, searched the whole city and confiscated arms from the bourgeoisie. Proletarian Petrograd was converted into a fortress. Machine guns were posted at the windows of the houses. The daily ration for workers amounted to half a pound of bread and one salt herring, but the spirit of Red Petrograd was indomitable.

On October 21, the Seventh Red Army launched a counter-offensive with tremendous enthusiasm, and on October 26 captured Krasnoye Selo. On November 14, the Red forces captured Yamburg and took the greater part of Yudenich's army prisoner. Yudenich's soldiers killed their officers and went over to the Red Army. The peasants harassed the rear of the retreating Whiteguards.

That was how Yudenich's army faded away.

The defeat of Denikin and Yudenich accelerated the utter defeat of Kolchak. In the autumn of 1919, the Red Army quickly checked Kolchak's attempt to advance in the region of Tobolsk. Amidst the severe frosts of Siberia the Red Army drove the exhausted Kolchak army across the Siberian steppes, through the taiga to the East. The Red Army had powerful allies in the Red partisans of the Urals and Siberia. The Bolsheviks took the lead in the struggle to establish Soviet power in Siberia. On November 14, 1919, the Red Army captured Omsk, Kolchak's capital, and on January 15, 1920, entered Irkutsk. Kolchak was arrested and shot. Soviet rule was established in Siberia.

#### 46. SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION DURING THE CIVIL WAR

**The Policy of War Communism.** During the Civil War the Soviet Republic was a besieged military camp. The interventionists surrounded her and operated an economic blockade. The forces of counter-revolution cut off the proletarian centres from the regions which supplied food and raw materials. The lack of raw materials, fuel and food caused a drop in production. In 1919 industrial output was only one-fourth of pre-war. Workers who had not gone to the front dispersed to the rural districts. The existence of numerous fronts put a tremendous strain upon the Soviet State. It was necessary to supply the army with bread, arms, footwear and clothing. To hold out and supply food to the essential categories of workers and the Red Army the Soviet State made a register of all stocks of food, fuel and manufactured goods. In addition to the big enterprises, medium and even small enterprises were nationalized.

On January 24, 1919, the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree introducing surplus appropriations, in conformity with which

the peasants were obliged to deliver to the state at fixed prices all stocks of food over and above their own requirements. Lenin explained the need for the measure as follows: "If you, the peasant, offer a loan to the state and give your grain, the worker will be able to restore industry. . . . There is no other way out!" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., pp. 409-410.)

Food was rationed on a strictly class basis. The bourgeoisie received one-fourth of the workers' ration, but children received rations at a higher rate.

The Soviet State introduced compulsory labour service for all classes. In drawing the bourgeoisie into work the Soviet State applied the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." Military methods, iron discipline had to be established in all Soviet, economic and trade union organizations; commissars were appointed or political departments set up in place of elected leaders. In the war area and areas liberated from the Whites, Revolutionary Committees were set up in place of elected Soviets. The whole of this system of measures, measures evoked by the conditions resulting from the country's defence, was designated by the term "War Communism."

The Civil War made it necessary to put the whole life of the country on a war footing. Only such a policy could guarantee the proletariat a firm rear and an invincible front. Only the strictest discipline, organization and centralization enabled the working class and the peasantry to organize victory over an immeasurably more powerful enemy.

**Economic and Cultural Development in the Period of the Civil War.** During the Civil War and foreign intervention the entire life of the country was subordinated to the interests of the war fronts; but even when conditions were most severe, when hunger, cold, epidemics, counter-revolutionary conspiracies and revolts and the hardships and dangers of war prevailed, the working class of the Land of Soviets continued the work of reorganizing all aspects of social life.

In the very first months after the establishment of Soviet power Lenin devoted considerable attention to the problem of electrifying the country. On his recommendation preparations were commenced in 1918 for the erection of a powerful hydroelectric plant on the river Volkhov, known as the Volkhovstroy project. In 1919, the erection of an electric power plant at Kashira, near Moscow, was started. At the same time work was commenced on the erection of the Shatura power plant, which was to use as fuel the peat available in the district. Thanks to the invention of a Russian engineer, the problem of utilizing peat fuel was solved, and in 1920 the temporary Shatura power plant began to produce power. From 1918 to 1920, a fairly large number of small power plants was built. In 1920, the output capacity of the electric power plants in Russia was even higher than



pre-war, but the actual output was lower owing to the fact that most of the plants were idle due to the shortage of fuel.

The seizure of the Donetz coal region by the Whites and the damage they did to the collieries caused the fuel crisis to become exceptionally acute. Wood became almost the only available form of fuel, but the cutting and transporting of logs was accompanied by enormous difficulties. The Council of Defence and the Council of People's Commissars drew up a number of measures to solve the fuel crisis. The railways were militarized and the transportation of wood fuel was put on a par with the transportation of war supplies. In November 1919, compulsory labour service was introduced for the preparation, loading and unloading of fuel of all kinds, and the peasants were obliged to supply transport facilities to cart wood logs to the railways and river ports. Thus, assisted by the self-sacrificing labours of the workers and peasants, and thanks to the firm discipline that was introduced, the Soviet Republic gradually emerged from the fuel crisis.

The food situation too was extremely acute for the working people. True, the People's Commissariat of Food collected three times more grain in the 1918-1919 season than in the preceding year, and in the following year it collected nearly 3,000,000 tons of grain; but this was an infinitesimal amount compared with the needs of the civilian population and the army. The state was able to supply the workers with only half the food products they required, the rest had to be purchased on the open market from speculators who charged exorbitant prices.

To combat profiteering, the co-operative societies were given the responsibility of purchasing from the peasants produce not liable to delivery under the surplus appropriations system. The workers were also encouraged by the Soviet government to cultivate vegetable plots.

On February 14, 1919, a decree was issued introducing socialist agrarian legislation and measures for the transition to socialist agriculture. The decree contained a number of measures for assisting the socialist sector of agriculture, namely, the state farms and collective farms. During the two years the proletarian dictatorship had been in existence 900 large state farms and 5,960 agricultural communes and co-operative farms were organized. The collective farms covered an area of over 3,000,000 hectares. The overwhelming majority of the peasants, however, remained small individual farmers.

Epidemics, particularly typhus, were a formidable menace at that time to the Land of Soviets. In a speech at the Seventh Congress of Soviets Lenin said: "We cannot imagine the horrors that have overtaken the localities infested by typhus. The population is helpless, enfeebled and bereft of material resources. All life, all public activity,

is coming to a standstill. We say: 'Comrades, all our attention must be devoted to this problem. Either the lice triumph over Socialism, or Socialism will triumph over the lice!' (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1936, p. 72.)

To combat epidemics, the Soviet government mobilized about a thousand doctors, who worked with self-sacrificing devotion to save the working people. Free medical assistance was introduced for the working people and many rich mansions were converted into hospitals, dispensaries, crèches and consultation centres.

During the Civil War years masses of workers were given apartments in bourgeois houses, in most cases rent free. Electric light and other municipal services were also free.

Even during the most difficult periods of the Civil War the Soviet State continued its cultural activity among the workers and peasants. At this time about 10,000,000 children attended school in Soviet Russia, whereas in tsarist Russia, which covered a far larger area, only about 8,000,000 children attended school. The Soviet school-teachers remained faithful to the people and vigorously set to work to reorganize the schools and adapt them to the needs and interests of the working people. Not infrequently they worked on empty stomachs and in freezing schoolrooms, and taught both children and adults in spite of the shortage of paper, books and writing materials.

An enormously important part in the cultural awakening of the people was played by the Party and Soviet newspapers, which reached the most remote corners of the country. In the towns, theatres and workers' clubs were opened, which provided free entertainment for masses of people who had never gone to theatres before.

Public dining rooms were opened to relieve workingwomen of the drudgery of the kitchen.

Particular attention was paid by the Soviet government to the struggle against child vagrancy, which became a mass phenomenon. On Lenin's recommendation, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, under the direction of Felix Dzerzhinsky, organized children's colonies where homeless waifs were trained in industrious habits.

During the period of the Civil War the working class set splendid examples of new forms of Communist labour. Communist subbotniks—the voluntary turn-out of masses of workers to perform work of public importance—became a regular sight. The first Communist subbotnik was organized on May 10, 1919, by the workers on the Moscow-Kazanskaya Railway. Lenin called it "a great initiative," seeing in these subbotniks the beginning of the new, Communist form of work, and the embryo of the new labour discipline of socialist society.

**The Respite in the Spring of 1920.** After Kolchak and Denikin were defeated the Soviet Republic received a brief respite. The Red

Army's victory, and the struggle which the workers in the capitalist countries had waged against intervention and the blockade, had strengthened Soviet Russia's international position. In February 1920, peace with Soviet Russia was concluded by Estonia, the first country to do so. "Peace with Estonia," said Lenin, "is an unprecedented victory over world imperialism. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 23.)

During the Civil War the Soviet government repeatedly invited the Entente powers to conclude peace, but all its offers were rejected.

In the beginning of December 1919, the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted, on Lenin's motion, a special resolution reaffirming "its undeviating desire for peace," and inviting the Entente powers to enter into peace negotiations, either collectively or severally. This was the eleventh time Soviet Russia had offered to negotiate peace, but this time too the offer was rejected. It was not until January 1920, after the main forces of the counter-revolution had been defeated, that the Supreme Council of the Entente decided to call off the economic blockade of Soviet Russia. This decision did not mean that the Entente had dropped the idea of further attempts at intervention. The imperialists were simply waiting for an opportunity to incite gentry-ridden Poland against Soviet Russia. Lenin warned the country of this in March 1920 when he wrote: "We know that France is instigating Poland and is spending millions there. . . ." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 58.)

The Soviet State took all measures to save the workers and peasants from another war. In January 1920, the Council of People's Commissars invited Poland to enter into peace negotiations, but the Polish gentry did not respond. On February 2, the Soviet government issued an appeal to the Polish people calling upon them to put a stop to the war and to commence a joint struggle against famine and economic chaos, but the Polish gentry kept this appeal from the Polish people. In the beginning of March 1920, the Soviet government made Poland a third offer of peace, but again Poland failed to answer and, with the assistance of the Entente, continued to arm. Thus, the danger of war still existed and it was impossible to demobilize the Red Army. While remaining under arms, many of the units of the Red Army were employed cutting timber for fuel, harvesting the crops and repairing the railways. A number of Red Army units stationed in the Urals, in Siberia and in the Ukraine were transformed into Labour Armies. In February 1920, a Committee for Universal Labour Service was set up. The Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was transformed into a Council of Labour and Defence, and a State Planning Commission (Gosplan) was set up to assist it.



V. I. Lenin Taking Part in a Subbotnik in the Kremlin, May 1, 1920. From a painting by M. Sokolov

Displaying enormous heroism and perseverance, the Soviet people utilized the brief respite to combat hunger, cold and epidemics. The economic situation in the Soviet Republic was extremely grave. Stocks of raw materials and fuel had run out. Coal output was only a fourth of the pre-war figure; the production of pig iron was only 3 per cent of pre-war, and the output of cotton textiles was only 5 per cent of pre-war. The area under cultivation and the crop yields had shrunk considerably. After the liberation of the grain-growing regions the food situation somewhat improved, but the dislocation of the railways rendered the transportation of grain extremely difficult. As many as 60 per cent of the locomotives in the country were out of commission.

The Soviet government took measures to strengthen the food administration and the work of the latter improved. Several thousand Communists were sent to work on the railways, and skilled workers were recalled from the front and sent into industry.

The Ninth Congress of the Bolshevik Party which was opened on March 29, 1920, discussed questions connected with the utilization of the respite for economic development and decided to begin by restoring the railways, improving the fuel supply, and restoring the iron and steel industry.

Lenin and Stalin upheld the necessity of strengthening one-man management in industry. In the early period of the Soviet regime collegial management had been the rule, and this had served as a good school for the training of Soviet administrative personnel. But during the Civil War, when there was a particular need for swift decisions on problems as they arose and for individuals to be personally responsible for the fulfilment of these decisions, collegial management proved to be a hindrance. Hence, the Ninth Congress of the Party resolved to "establish complete and absolute one-man management in workshops and shops, to work towards one-man management of whole factories, and to reduce collegial management at the middle and higher levels of the administrative and industrial apparatus."

At the congress this decision was opposed by a group which included many former "Left Communists," and which called for "democratic centralism." Distorting the Bolshevik principle of democratic centralism, they demanded the election of managements under all circumstances, the loosening of discipline, demanded unrestricted "collegial management," and opposed one-man management in industry and Soviet administration. At a time when the country was mustering every ounce of strength for the struggle, the "democratic centralists" caused disruption in the ranks of the Party and weakened the dictatorship of the proletariat, thereby assisting the worst enemies of the Soviet State who were preparing to attack it again. At this time also Trotsky came out with a pernicious proposal to convert the temporary measures to

militarize labour which had been called forth by the exigencies of the Civil War and economic chaos, into a permanent system of leading the working class and the peasantry. In particular, he proposed that the Labour Armies should be made permanent institutions, for he regarded coercion as the natural method by which the working class should lead the peasantry.

The Party, which during the Civil War had done its utmost to strengthen the military and political alliance between the working class and the middle peasants, rejected all these proposals which could only have led to disaster.

#### 47. THE DEFEAT OF THE WHITE POLES AND WRANGEL

**War with Gentry-ridden Poland.** The respite which the Soviet Republic enjoyed came to an end in the spring of 1920, when the Entente launched another campaign against the country. This time the Entente chose for its tools gentry-ridden Poland and the Whiteguard General Wrangel, who had mustered the remnants of Denikin's army in the Crimea.

Describing this third Entente campaign against Soviet Russia, Comrade Stalin wrote: "... The campaign which gentry-ridden Poland has launched against workers' and peasants' Russia is in fact an Entente campaign. . . . The point is, first, that Poland could not have organized her attack on Russia without the assistance of the Entente; that primarily France, and then Great Britain and America, are giving every support to Poland's offensive with arms, equipment, money and instructors" (J. Stalin, *Articles and Speeches on the Ukraine*, Kiev, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 90).

The Polish imperialists had taken an active part in all the Entente's campaigns against Soviet Russia, and in obedience to the French imperialists, Pilsudski, the head of the Polish state, had answered the Soviet government's repeated peace offers by proposing terms that were nothing more than the provocation of another war.

In April 1920, the Whiteguard Poles, believing that Soviet Russia was not ready for another war and that the Red Army was war-weary, invaded the Ukraine without declaring war. Their aim was to seize the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Lithuania, and by annexing these Soviet Republics to form a "Great Poland" that was to stretch from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. The Polish gentry hoped to gain control of Ukrainian grain and Donetz coal. They received the help of those betrayers of the Ukrainian people, the Petliura-ites, who promised to grant estates to the Polish landlords if their government recognized Petliura as head of the Ukrainian (counter-revolutionary) government.

The Poles commenced their offensive by hurling an army of 50 000 men against a force of 15,000 Red Army men, which was then operating in the Ukraine. Thanks to their numerical superiority, Pilsudski's troops were able, on May 6, to capture Kiev, and soon captured nearly the whole of the Ukraine on the right bank of the Dnieper. To those districts where Polish landlords had formerly owned estates the interventionists sent punitive detachments which robbed the peasants not only of their land, but of all their grain stocks and cattle; and if they met with the slightest resistance they burned down villages and shot and flogged the peasants. In the village of Kocheriny (Byelorussia), for example, the miscreants, after setting fire to the peasants' cottages, prevented the inmates, even women and children, from leaving them, and 200 persons were burned to death. In the towns and villages where Jews resided, the White Poles organized pogroms.

Thousands of Ukrainian and Byelorussian workers and peasants rose up to fight the Polish gentry.

The command of the Red Army that was operating against the White Poles on the Southwestern Front was entrusted to Comrade Stalin. The First Cavalry Army, led by Voroshilov and Budyonny, was placed at the disposal of Comrade Stalin. It performed a heroic march of a thousand kilometres in full fighting order from Maikop to Uman, on the way clearing the rear of the Petliura and Makhno bands who were plundering the Ukrainian villages.

In the beginning of June 1920, the First Cavalry Army pierced the Polish Front in the region of Kazatin, occupied Zhitomir and moved into the rear of the Polish forces. This break-through was of decisive importance in turning the tide of the war. On Pilsudski's own confession, the First Cavalry Army roused dismay and panic in the ranks of the Polish army, which began rapidly to retreat from the region of Kiev and Berdichev. On June 12, Kiev was liberated from the White Poles.

Meanwhile, the Red Army was preparing for an offensive on the Western Front. By the beginning of July nearly 100,000 Soviet troops were concentrated here against 75,000 Poles. On July 4, the Red Army launched its offensive along the whole of the Lithuanian-Byelorussian Front and on July 11 liberated Minsk, which the Poles had occupied since August 1919. The masses of the working people in the Ukraine and Byelorussia welcomed their liberators with enthusiasm and joy.

In this war against the White Poles the Red Army displayed not only exceptional heroism but also a high level of political understanding. Many of the heroes of the Civil War greatly distinguished themselves. One of these was Grigori Ivanovich Kotovsky, "the bravest among the modest and the most modest among the brave," as

Comrade Stalin described him. In the beginning of 1918, Kotovsky organized a partisan detachment to fight the Rumanian invaders. Later his detachment was incorporated in the Red Army and remained with it throughout the Civil War. He became a terror to the White Poles, and led the cavalry brigade which he commanded, in the boldest attacks.

About the middle of August 1920, the Red Army commenced a drive on Warsaw and Lvov. Alarmed by the victories of the Red Army, the Entente hastened to the aid of the Polish gentry. Thousands of machine guns and artillery pieces and hundreds of aeroplanes and motor trucks were sent to Warsaw from France, and the French General Weygand arrived in Warsaw to organize the defence of Poland.

Earlier, Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, had called upon the Soviet government to stop the offensive and conclude an armistice with Poland, threatening to declare war in the event of a refusal. Curzon's aim was to secure a respite for the Poles, and consequently, the Soviet government rejected this note.

The Red Army continued its offensive, but the Soviet government declared that it was willing to open peace negotiations with Poland, but without intermediaries.

On July 22, the Polish government sent a request for the opening of peace negotiations. The Soviet government agreed. Negotiations were opened, but were broken off several days later by Poland. The Red Army resumed its offensive.

At this time the First Cavalry Army laid siege to Lvov. In a telegram to Red Army General Headquarters dated August 21, Comrade Voroshilov urged the necessity of capturing Lvov in order to inflict a crushing defeat upon the Poles. The High Command, however, which was headed by the traitor Trotsky, ordered the siege of Lvov to be raised, ostensibly for the purpose of reinforcing the drive against Warsaw. This was downright treachery, for Trotsky's orders deprived the Southwestern Front of its major striking force. The capture of Lvov and the further advance of the First Red Cavalry Army to the principal industrial centres of Poland would have been the best assist-



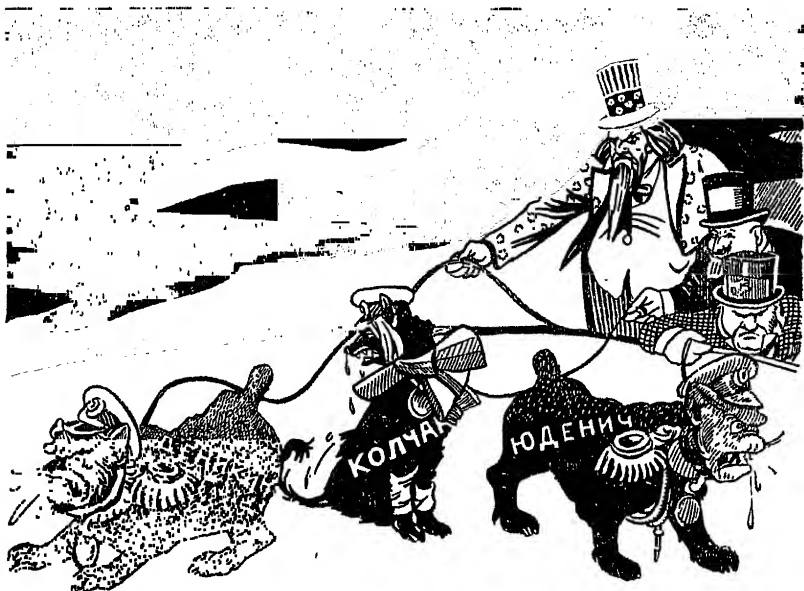
G. I. Kotovsky



ance that could be rendered the Western Front. By his action Trotsky rendered direct assistance to the Poles and the Entente. As for the Red Army offensive on Warsaw, it proceeded in an absolutely disorganized fashion, through the fault of the traitors Trotsky and Tukhachevsky. The Red Army, after fighting its way forward for almost 500 kilometres, became separated from its reserves. Supplies of ammunition were late in arriving. Reinforcements failed to keep up with the rapidly advancing main force. So strenuous was the advance that the Red Army men wore out their footwear and many were obliged to proceed barefooted. Although the badly-organized offensive on Warsaw ended in failure and the Red Army was obliged to retreat, gentry-ridden Poland, exhausted as a result of the war, was unable to fight any longer and offered to conclude peace.

Peace between Soviet Russia and Poland was signed in Riga in March 1921. In conformity with the Riga Peace Treaty the part of Byelorussia which the Poles had occupied at the beginning of the war was restored to Soviet Russia, but Western Byelorussia and Ukrainian Galicia were retained by Poland.

**The Defeat of Wrangel.** The Polish gentry were to have received assistance from Baron Wrangel, who had established himself in the Crimea. As Lenin put it, gentry-ridden Poland and Wrangel



The Entente. Poster by Denis



S. M. Budyonny, M. V. Frunze, and K. E. Voroshilov at Headquarters of Southern Front

were the two hands of international imperialism which wanted to strangle the Land of Soviets. With the assistance of the Entente, Wrangel reorganized the remnants of Denikin's army which had been transported to the Crimea in Entente ships from ports in the Ukraine and Caucasasia. The remnants of the Russian forces which had fought in France during the imperialist war were also sent to the Crimea to reinforce Wrangel's army. That was how Wrangel's army was formed. The Entente also supplied him with arms, ammunition and provisions.

Lenin saw the danger looming in the Crimea, and as early as March 1920 demanded of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic that it prevent the concentration of a White army there. "Pay close attention to the obvious blunder *which has been committed* in connection with the Crimea (failure to dispatch sufficient forces in time); concentrate all efforts on rectifying this blunder. . . ." he wrote. But the War Department failed to carry out Lenin's instructions.

Lenin's warning was particularly justified because when the Whiteguard Poles launched their attack the Entente increased its pressure upon Soviet Russia. British naval forces were concentrated off the coasts of the Black and Baltic Seas. On April 4 and 5, 1920, Japan renewed her intervention in the Far East. France and Great Britain were supplying Wrangel with arms and helping him to prepare for an offen-

sive, the first objective of which, on the demand of the French bourgeoisie, he was to make the occupation of the Donetz Basin.

On July 7, 1920, Wrangel marched his forces out of the Crimea and occupied Northern Taurida. The Crimean "thorn" grew into a formidable danger, for Wrangel had got into the rear of the Red Army which was operating on the Polish Front.

Comrade Stalin, who was directing operations on the South-western Front, took measures to smash Wrangel's forces which were creeping up from the Crimea. By the beginning of August 1920, the units of the Red Army in action against Wrangel received additional reinforcements. The Red divisions passed to the offensive, inflicted several defeats upon the enemy, but failed to exterminate him completely. Nevertheless, as a result of this offensive, the Red Army entrenched itself at Kakhovka, on the left bank of the Dnieper. Thus was established the famous Kakhovka bridgehead which threatened the rear of Wrangel's army. Wrangel hurled his picked troops, reinforced with tanks, against Kakhovka, but failed to capture it. The Kakhovka bridgehead, the formation of which had been planned by Comrade Stalin, was an extremely important factor in bringing about the utter defeat of the "Black Baron," as Wrangel was called.

In the beginning of August the forces operating against Wrangel were formed into a separate front. The Party instructed Comrade Stalin to concentrate his efforts entirely upon this front, but illness prevented him from consummating the liquidation of Wrangel. M. V. Frunze was placed in command of the Southern Front. Frunze's plan of operations was to cut off Wrangel's army from the Isthmus of Perekop and inflict defeat upon him before he could take cover behind the fortifications of Perekop. Using the Kakhovka bridgehead as his base, he launched a drive with the object of surrounding Wrangel's forces. The First Cavalry Army, which had been transferred to the Southern Front, broke through into the rear of Wrangel's army. In the beginning of October, Wrangel made another attempt to capture Kakhovka and hurled fourteen tanks, ten armoured cars and infantry armed with 600 heavy machine guns against it. But the tank attack was repulsed. The Red Army men rushed at the tanks and pelting them with hand grenades, drove them off. The October battles at Kakhovka marked the beginning of Wrangel's defeat.

On October 28 the Red Army launched a general offensive on the Southern Front. Sanguinary fighting raged in Northern Taurida.

As a result of the battles fought from October 28 to November 2, Wrangel's army was defeated. Nearly 20,000 prisoners were taken. Nevertheless, Wrangel's best troops succeeded in retreating to the Crimea and in taking cover behind the Perekop fortifications.

The Isthmus of Perekop is eight kilometres wide, and was intersected

by the Turkish Wall, which was twenty metres high. In front of this wall there was a deep ditch stretching from the Black Sea on the one side to the swampy Sivash (or Putrid Sea—an inlet of the Azov Sea) on the other. On the wall were mounted about 200 guns. The whole Isthmus was covered with a dense network of barbed-wire entanglements. Near the village of Yushun, south of the Isthmus, a second line of strong fortifications had been built. The Isthmus of Chongar, east of Perekop, was fortified no less strongly than Perekop, and a Whiteguard fleet was stationed there. With the aid of French army engineers Perekop was transformed into a first-class fortress. The only way to attack it was across a completely open and level terrain, or by wading across the Sivash. It proved impossible to make an outflanking movement *via* the Tongue of Arabat, as this needed the support of the Red Fleet, which, however, was icebound in Taganrog Bay. Consequently, Frunze, ignoring the advice of high military experts who regarded this as an absolutely hopeless undertaking, issued the order to storm Perekop. In the biting cold, in threadbare clothes, half starved, and lacking the necessary technical implements, the Red Army men proceeded with the preparations for breaking through the Perekop fortifications.

The Red Army was burning with desire to put an end to Wrangel as speedily as possible. One night the forward units of the 15th and 52nd Divisions, taking advantage of the fact that the wind had driven back the water of the Sivash, waded knee-deep across the muddy bed of the Rotten Sea to get into the rear of the Perekop fortifications, dragging artillery and machine guns through the briny and icy water. When they reached the opposite shore, which was covered with barbed-wire entanglements, the wind changed, drove the water back into the Sivash, and cut off their retreat. The enemy opened a terrific fire. The heroic Red Army men rushed at the entanglements, threw their greatcoats over them and climbed over the barbed-wire obstacles. On November 8, the Soviet troops entrenched themselves on the shore of Litovsky Peninsula, threatening the rear of Perekop.

At about midday on November 8, the 51st Division launched a frontal attack against Perekop, but the first attempt to capture the Turkish Wall failed. Reinforcements were needed for a second assault, but by this time the water was returning to the Sivash, threatening to cut off the forces that were fighting on the Litovsky Peninsula. Calling in the assistance of the local Revolutionary Committees, Frunze mobilized the peasants of the surrounding villages to fight the incoming water. The peasants came out *en masse*, brought along straw, dug ditches, and within a few hours built a dam which held up the incoming water. In this way, fresh reinforcements, ammunition and provisions were sent across the Sivash. At 2 a. m. the 51st Division made another assault on the Turkish Wall, and this time succeeded in capturing it.

After the capture of Perekop the last fortifications in the hands

of the Whites were those near the village of Yushun. Frunze ordered the position to be attacked from the front and rear. On the night of November 10, the Yushun positions were captured and the Whites retreated in panic. At this juncture a revolt against Wrangel broke out in the Crimea. Crimean partisans came down from the mountains and struck at the retreating White cavalry.

On November 16, Frunze telegraphed to Lenin: "Today our cavalry occupied Kerch. The Southern Front is liquidated." The remnants of Wrangel's troops boarded Entente ships and sailed for Turkey. The capture of Perekop marked the victory of the Soviets on the last front of the Civil War.

## *Chapter XII*

### THE CIVIL WAR IN THE BORDER REGIONS

#### 48. THE LIBERATION OF KAZAKHSTAN AND CENTRAL ASIA

**The Military-Political Alliance of the Peoples of Russia.** In the struggle against the interventionists and the counter-revolution the alliance was strengthened between the peoples fighting jointly against the common enemy. The heroic struggle of the Russian people against the landlords, the bourgeoisie and the foreign interventionists developed into a patriotic war of the working people of all the nationalities inhabiting Russia for their freedom and independence.

Under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin these nationalities consolidated the military and political alliance they had voluntarily established. It was this alliance, operated under the leadership of the working class and the Bolshevik Party that ensured victory on all fronts during the Civil War.

As Stalin wrote: "... The Russian workers could not have defeated Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel had they not enjoyed the sympathy and confidence of the oppressed masses of the border regions of former Russia. It must not be forgotten that the field of action of these mutinous generals was confined to the area of the border regions inhabited mainly by non-Russian nationalities, and the latter could not but hate Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel for their imperialist policy and policy of Russification. The Entente, intervening and supporting these generals, could rely only on the elements in the border regions who were the vehicles of Russification. And thereby it only inflamed the hatred of the population of the border regions for the mutinous generals and increased the sympathy of the population for the Soviet government.

"This accounted for the intrinsic weakness of the Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel rear, and therefore for the weakness of their fronts, that is, in the long run, for their defeat" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, pp. 105-106).

**The Liberation of Kazakhstan.** At the end of 1918, Soviet rule prevailed over the greater part of Kazakhstan. The People's Commissariat of Nationalities set the Bolsheviks in Kazakhstan the task of establishing an Autonomous Soviet Republic. However, some of the leading members of the Party and Soviet bodies hindered the proclamation of the autonomy of Kazakhstan. The Kazakh nationalists took advantage of this, and in the spring of 1919, while Kolchak was developing his offensive, they carried out, with the assistance of Kolchak's agents, a counter-revolutionary *coup* in the Turgai Region and captured and shot the Soviet leaders, including Amangeldy Imanov, the national hero of Kazakhstan.

Continuing its drive against the forces of Kolchak and Dutov, the Red Army went to the aid of the Kazakh people. Comrade Frunze, who was in command of the Turkestan army that was fighting Dutov, issued an appeal to the working people of Kazakhstan to set up Soviets and support the Red Army that was bringing the Kazakh people freedom and independence. In July 1919, a Revolutionary Committee was set up to administer the Kirghiz territory (now Kazakhstan). This committee set up organs of Soviet power in Kazakhstan.

**The Liberation of Central Asia.** The counter-revolutionary revolts of the Urals, Orenburg and Semirechensk Cossacks cut off Turkestan from Soviet Russia: Turkestan itself saw the development of a counter-revolutionary movement of native feudalists and kulaks, known as the Basmachi. The British imperialists and Russian Whiteguards who had occupied the Transcaspian Region tried to link up with the White Cossacks and Kolchak's forces and seize Soviet Turkestan. The situation in Turkestan during the Civil War was very grave. The region was cut off from its grain supplies and the population and the cattle died of starvation. The Basmachi plundered and wrecked the villages. The Red Army men were almost in rags and were badly armed; shells and small-arms ammunition for the Turkestan Red Army were manufactured in a primitive way in the railway workshops. Lenin and Stalin paid special attention to the struggle to maintain Soviet rule in Turkestan and sent Red Army units, munitions and provisions to help the working people of Turkestan.

The fighting in Central Asia proceeded mainly along the railways. Trains of an unusual appearance could be seen creeping along the dilapidated tracks. In front of a worn-out locomotive there was a flat car, "fortified" with bales of cotton; behind the locomotive were freight wagons carrying Red Army men, war materiel and supplies and a first-aid station. On the flat car carrying the cotton bales machine guns



V. V. Kuibyshev

were mounted. These trains were called "armoured trains." Owing to the shortage of petrol and wood, the locomotives were often fueled with cottonseed oil.

When Kolchak and Dutov were defeated, the Turkestan Soviet Republic united again with Soviet Russia. In the autumn of 1919, a commission of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee headed by Comrades Frunze and Kuibyshev, went to Turkestan. They had instructions from the C.C. and Lenin to help the working people of Central Asia to wipe out the remnants of the Whiteguards and to consolidate Soviet rule there.

After defeating the remnants of Kolchak's Southern Army and liberating Kazakhstan, Frunze ordered his army to effect a junction with the Red Army of Turkestan. In fighting to liberate Turkmenia from the British interventionists and the Whiteguards, the Red Army employed the tactics of widely outflanking the enemy's positions by marching through the Kara-Kum Desert, or over the Kopet-dagh Mountains. In the summer the Red Army men had to march for days through the waterless desert in a temperature of 60° Centigrade, receiving a meagre water ration of three glasses per day. An equally difficult trek was undertaken by Red Army units under the command of V. V. Kuibyshev at the end of 1919, in winter time, the weather being exceptionally cold for Turkmenia. The march of men, horses, and camels loaded with guns and supplies, went on for four days and nights. The sudden appearance of the Red Army from the desert caused the Whiteguards to flee in panic.

In February 1920, the Red Army, after heavy fighting, captured Krasnovodsk, the last British and Whiteguard stronghold in Turkestan. The railway from Ashkhabad to Krasnovodsk was cleared and Soviet power was restored all over Turkmenia.

Between Soviet Turkestan and the Transcaspian Region, which the Whiteguards still controlled, lay Khiva and Bokhara, the most backward regions in Central Asia. These territories, with their mediaeval order of life, served as the refuge for all the counter-revolutionary

forces that were attacking Soviet Turkestan. Bokhara was ruled by an Emir who invited British officers to organize his army. In the beginning of 1918, the working people of Bokhara rose in revolt against the Emir, but the revolt was suppressed with great cruelty. In February 1920, a revolt broke out in Khiva against the Khan, and Khiva was proclaimed the Khoresm People's Republic. In August 1920, another revolt broke out against the Emir of Bokhara. The Red Army came to the aid of the rebels and finally liberated Bokhara. The Emir fled to Afghanistan under the protection of the British. Bokhara was also proclaimed a People's Republic.

The Turkestan Commission headed by Frunze and Kuibyshev did a great deal to restore confidence and friendship among the peoples of Central Asia and also to strengthen their economic and cultural ties with the Russian and other peoples of Soviet Russia. Thanks to the work of Comrades Frunze and Kuibyshev, the working people of Central Asia began better to understand that the Soviet State is the friend of the toiling and oppressed peoples.

The correct policy on the national question pursued by the Bolshevik Party, the policy of Lenin and Stalin, helped the peoples of Central Asia to outlive national strife, and resulted in the consolidation of the Central-Asian Soviet Republics. This facilitated the defeat of the Basmachi bands. An era of peace set in for the peoples of Central Asia.

#### 49. SOVIET POWER IS ESTABLISHED IN TRANSCAUCASIA

**The Victory of the Soviet Regime in Azerbaijan.** In the spring of 1920, after Denikin was defeated, the Red Army on the Caucasian Front, led by G. K. Orjonikidze and S. M. Kirov, drew near to the borders of Transcaucasia.

The masses of the working people of the Caucasus appealed to the Red Army for assistance in fighting the counter-revolutionaries. In their appeal they wrote: "We do not wish to remain slaves, particularly now, when by our side stands the emancipated proletariat of Russia, with whom we want to form a single proletarian international family."

The conditions of the workers and peasants in all the Transcaucasian Republics were extremely hard. Power had been seized by the respective nationalist counter-revolutionary parties—the Mensheviks in Georgia, the Mussavatists in Azerbaijan and the Dashnacks in Armenia—who were in the service of the foreign imperialists and did all in their power to help the Russian counter-revolutionaries. In January 1920, the Transcaucasian Republics, governed as they were by the counter-revolutionary nationalist parties, were officially recognized by the Supreme Council of the Entente. The workers and peasants





S. M. Kirov and G. K. Orjonikidze During the Civil War

rose in rebellion, but they were suppressed with the aid of foreign interventionists. The land remained in the possession of the landlords. In Azerbaijan the khans and begs continued to exploit the peasants.

In response to the appeal of the working people of Caucasia the Red Army of Soviet Russia launched an offensive against the Caucasian counter-revolutionaries and on March 30, 1920 liberated the highlanders of North Caucasus and Daghestan. Soviet power was established in the whole of the liberated territory.

The establishment of Soviet power in Daghestan gave a further impetus to the revolutionary movement in Azerbaijan. The workers of Baku, led by A. I. Mikoyan, who was then working underground in that city, made preparations for an insurrection against the counter-revolutionary Mussavatists. In response to the request of the underground Revolutionary Committee, the Eleventh Red Army, under the command of Kirov and Orjonikidze, went to the assistance of the insurgent Baku workers and on April 27, 1920, the Mussavatists were defeated and put to flight. Azerbaijan was proclaimed a Soviet Republic.

**The Establishment of Soviet Power in Armenia.** In May 1920, a popular revolt broke out in Armenia against the Dashnacks, who had been openly supporting the foreign imperialists and the Ar-

menian exploiters. The Dashnacks succeeded in crushing this revolt and dealt ruthlessly with the rebels. The days of the Dashnack regime were numbered, however. The revolutionary movement grew month after month. Another rebellion broke out in the autumn of 1920. The Armenian Revolutionary Committee, which directed this rebellion, appealed to the Red Army for assistance, and with its aid the Dashnacks were overthrown. On November 29, 1920, Armenia became a Soviet Republic.

**The Fight to Establish Soviet Power in Georgia.** The Georgian Mensheviks pursued the same anti-popular policy as was pursued by the Mussavatists in Azerbaijan and the Dashnacks in Armenia. In January 1919, the Menshevik government of Georgia passed a law for the sale of "surplus" land by landlords to private purchasers. As a result of this "agrarian reform" all the best land was taken by the landlords and kulaks. In dividing the land the landlord was given one share of the land, another share went to his wife, a third to his sister. Thus, all the land was distributed between the landlord's nearest relatives. That meant the restoration of the landed proprietorship in existence before the promulgation of the law of 1919. Deprived of the land, the peasants rose in revolt, seized the land by force and divided it among themselves. The Menshevik rulers sent punitive expeditions against the peasants and set up field courts-martial. The Georgian Mensheviks claimed that theirs was democratic rule, but actually there was no democracy in Georgia. The Mensheviks would not permit free elections to the Constituent Assembly. There was not a single worker or peasant in the Georgian government. All the laws that were passed were in the interests of the landlords, kulaks and capitalists. Trade unions and workers' newspapers were suppressed, strikes were banned, Bolsheviks were flung into prison. The Mensheviks pursued a chauvinist great-power policy, persecuting the national minorities in Georgia.

In December 1918, the Mensheviks launched a fratricidal war against Armenia with the object of annexing villages on the Armenian-Georgian border with mixed Georgian and Armenian populations. Taking advantage of Georgia's advantageous geographical situation, the Georgian Mensheviks prevented the transit of goods over the Georgian railways by imposing exorbitant transit dues.

In view of the fact that the Red Army was drawing near, the Georgian Mensheviks, in the spring of 1920, offered to conclude peace with Soviet Russia, and in May 1920, a peace treaty was signed. S. M. Kirov was sent to Georgia as the Soviet plenipotentiary representative. He vigorously exposed the refusal of the Georgian Mensheviks honestly to carry out the terms of the treaty they had signed with the Soviet government. -

The situation in Georgia became increasingly critical for the Menshevik rulers. The revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants, led by the Georgian Bolsheviks, grew all over the country. Revolts broke out, first in one county and then in another, and the rebels established Soviet power in those districts.

In the middle of January 1921, the Armenian peasants in the border regions annexed by Menshevik Georgia rose in revolt. The revolt spread to the Georgian districts. On February 16, a Georgian Revolutionary Committee was set up, which took the lead in the struggle to establish Soviet rule. The Eleventh Red Army, under the command of Sergo Orjonikidze, was sent to the aid of the insurgent Georgian workers and peasants. Masses of Georgian workers, peasants and soldiers went over to the side of the Red Army. On February 25, 1921, Orjonikidze sent Lenin and Stalin the following telegram: "The Red flag of Soviet power is flying over Tiflis. Long live Soviet Georgia!"

Several days later a successful insurrection took place in Abkhasia. On March 4, 1921, the Abkhasian Revolutionary Committee sent the following radio message to Lenin and Stalin: "By the will of the working people, a new Socialist Soviet Republic has been born—Abkhasia. The Soviet Republic of this small nation serves as a striking illustration of the great role of liberator being played by the Red Army."

The Mensheviks fled from Tiflis to Batum in the hope of receiving assistance from the Turkish government, to whom they promised to cede Batum; but an insurrection against the Menshevik traitors broke out in that city too. On March 19, 1921, Batum and the whole of Adjara were proclaimed Soviet.

The bankrupt Menshevik government of Georgia fled abroad on a French torpedo boat, taking with them a large amount of treasure that belonged to the Georgian people.

## 50. THE DEFEAT OF THE JAPANESE INTERVENTIONISTS

**The Fight Against Japanese Intervention in the Far East.** The Japanese imperialists, by agreement with the Entente imperialists, seized the Far East as early as 1918. Japan was the pioneer of military intervention in Siberia and the Far East.

The Japanese imperialists had long coveted the vast and rich Far Eastern territory. The first landing of Japanese troops in Vladivostok took place on April 5, 1918. This marked the beginning of Allied intervention. By September 1918, 100,000 Japanese troops had been landed in Vladivostok, from where Japanese units marched northward to the region of the rivers Ussuri and Amur, and westwards



Sergei Lazo Addressing a Meeting in Vladivostok on the Day the City was Liberated from the Kolchak Forces, January 31, 1920

to Blagoveshchensk, Chita and the Transbaikalia. The principal area of activity of the Japanese imperialists was the Amur and the Maritime Regions.

At the same time the Japanese imperialists began to supply Kolchak's army lavishly with arms, ammunition and money, and to form Whiteguard detachments on their own account. Their tools were the Whiteguard bandits Ataman Semyonov and Ataman Kalmykov, who were notorious for the incredible atrocities they perpetrated. In August 1918, Semyonov's bandit forces, supplied with Japanese artillery, captured Chita; in September, Kalmykov's bands captured Khabarovsk. On September 18, the Whiteguards captured the last stronghold of Soviet power in the Far East, namely, Blagoveshchensk.

After the fall of the Soviets, power passed into the hands of counter-revolutionary governments—Semyonov's government in Transbaikalia, and Kalmykov's government in Khabarovsk. The Japanese seized the Soviet fleet on the Amur, robbed the Russian fishermen of their catch and the peasants of their grain stocks and cattle. They shipped to Japan huge quantities of provisions and timber.

The Japanese imperialists cruelly suppressed the slightest attempt at resistance. The village of Ivanovka, for example, was subjected to repeated raids by the Japanese. One day the Japanese burst into the village, drove 300 peasants onto the village green, lined them up in rows, and mowed them down with machine-gun fire, row after

row. Then they set fire to the village, surrounded it, and allowed no one to escape from the conflagration. The inhabitants perished in the flames. The school, packed with children, and the hospital with its bed-ridden patients, were burned to the ground. The horses, cattle and poultry were roasted alive. The hearts of the peasants in the Far East became filled with burning hatred for the Japanese imperialists. Partisan units were formed in the taiga all over the Far East. Their battle cry was: "For Soviet power!"

Exceptionally popular among the leaders of the partisan war in the Far East was Sergei Lazo. At the time the February revolution broke out he was a sublieutenant in Krasnoyarsk. He removed his officer's shoulder straps and placed his company at the command of the Krasnoyarsk Soviet. In 1918, he joined the Bolshevik Party and began a heroic struggle against the Japanese imperialists. After the fall of the Soviet regime in the Far East he retreated to the taiga together with the other Bolsheviks. Soon he became a popular partisan commander.

After defeating Kolchak, the Red Army drew close to the Far East, but after capturing Verkhne-Udinsk its advance eastward was halted. Its next objective was Chita, where large Japanese forces were concentrated. To attack Chita meant coming into direct collision with the Japanese troops, and that meant open war between Japan and Soviet Russia. The Soviet Republic could not afford to plunge into such a war, for a new danger was threatening on its western frontiers—the Entente's third campaign, in which gentry-ridden Poland played the leading role. To defeat the White Poles and Wrangel the Soviet Republic needed a respite in the Far East, and it was evident that to call for the establishment of Soviet power there would have meant coming into immediate collision with Japan.

The Party and the Soviet government were of the opinion that it was not worth while running the risk of war with the Japanese imperialists, whose forces were still quite formidable. The thing to do was to direct the struggle of the workers and peasants of the Far East against the Japanese imperialists while avoiding a direct military conflict with Japan.

The Party and the Soviet government therefore agreed to the formation in the Far East of a "buffer state" which would, for a time, save the R.S.F.S.R. from direct contact with Japan. Lenin sent the Revolutionary Committee of Siberia and the command of the Fifth Army instructions to set about the establishment of a buffer state. In this way the Far Eastern Republic arose in 1920. In form it was a bourgeois-democratic state, but it was directed by Bolsheviks. The formation of this state enabled the Soviet Republic to avoid war with Japan under unfavourable conditions, and to muster forces for a decisive struggle against Japanese imperialism.

Realizing that their position in the Far East was becoming more and more untenable, the Japanese imperialists made repeated efforts to create pretexts for continuing their intervention. In January 1920, after a successful revolt Vladivostok had passed under the control of a Revolutionary Committee headed by Sergei Lazo. On April 4 and 5, the Japanese attacked Vladivostok, arrested Lazo, Lutsky and Sibir-tsev, the Bolshevik leaders in the Far East, and handed them over to the Whiteguard bandits who burnt them alive in a locomotive furnace. The Japanese committed similar atrocities in other towns in the Far East.

The savage cruelty of the Japanese imperialists in the Far East gave rise to universal indignation. A revolt began in Transbaikalia. In October the partisans and the People's Revolutionary Army of the Far Eastern Republic captured Chita. Fearing that Japan would become too strong in the Far East, the United States brought pressure to bear upon her to open negotiations with the government of the Far Eastern Republic for the evacuation of the Japanese troops. The negotiations were conducted in Dairen, where the Japanese imperialists presented seventeen demands, which, if accepted, would have transformed the Russian Far East into a Japanese colony. They demanded that Vladivostok be placed under foreign control, that they be granted unlimited fishing, mining and navigation rights, that all fortresses in the Russian Far East be razed, that the Soviet Pacific Fleet be destroyed and that the northern half of Sakhalin be leased to Japan for eighty years. Finally they demanded a guarantee that a Communist regime would be barred "for all time" from the Far Eastern



Japanese Atrocities in the Maritime Region

Republic. The Soviet delegation rejected these demands of the Japanese imperialists.

Japanese intervention in the Far East was on its last legs. That was why the imperialists began still more actively to assist the Russian Whiteguards. In 1921, they set up a new counter-revolutionary government in Vladivostok.

The People's Revolutionary Army was sent to the aid of the Maritime Region.

**The Battle of Volochayevka.** The counter-revolutionaries' main stronghold on the road to Khabarovsk was the fortress of Volochayevka, which had been built by the Japanese. All the hills around Volochayevka were strongly fortified, and these fortifications could be reached only by crossing a plain covered with deep snow. On February 10, 1922, the People's Revolutionary Army, with the battle cry of "Conquer or die!" launched an assault upon Volochayevka. Neither the twelve rows of barbed-wire entanglements, the hurricane fire of the enemy, the frost, 40° below zero Centigrade, nor the biting wind could stop the heroic onrush of the Red warriors. They hacked at the entanglements with their swords, demolished them with the butts of their rifles, threw their greatcoats over them and crept towards the enemy's trenches under machine-gun fire. After two days' fighting the Whites could no longer withstand the onslaught and retreated to Khabarovsk. On February 14, 1922, the People's Revolutionary Army captured Khabarovsk. Continuing its advance it cleared the Maritime Region of Whites. In October Spassk, the last Whiteguard stronghold, was captured, and on October 25, 1922, the revolutionary troops occupied Vladivostok.

This concluding stage of the struggle for Soviet power in the Far East is commemorated in the following words of the popular partisan song:

*The Atamans' hordes we shattered  
We put the Whites to flight.  
And on the shore of the Pacific  
We terminated the fight.*

Commenting on this victory when the Civil War was over, Lenin said: "Vladivostok is very far away, but it is our town." This explains why the brave sons of the Russian people fought so heroically in the Far East until they had driven the last of the interventionists from Soviet soil.

In November 1922, on the fifth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Soviet rule was restored in the Far East.

**Soviet Russia's Fraternal Assistance to the Working People of Mongolia.** The Japanese imperialists had long harboured designs of seizing Manchuria, Mongolia and the Russian Far East, right up to Lake Baikal, with the object of converting this vast area into a "Great Mongolia" which was to be a dependency of Japan.



The People's Revolutionary Army Enters Vladivostok, October 25, 1922

At the end of 1918, the Japanese ordered the Whiteguard Ataman Semyonov to form a "Great Mongolian State," to consist of Outer Mongolia and the present Buryat-Mongolia, which is inhabited by Buryats, kinsmen of the Mongols.

When the Red Army defeated Ataman Semyonov, the latter's partner, the Whiteguard General Baron Ungern, retreated, in 1920, with his hordes of bandits into Mongolia. In February 1921, Ungern captured Urga, the capital of Mongolia. The Mongolian people took to arms to fight the Whiteguard Ungern and the Japanese imperialists. At the head of this struggle was the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, the leader of which was Sukhe-Bator, a printer by trade, who organized the partisan movement. In March 1921, a Mongolian Provisional People's Revolutionary Government was set up and it appealed to Soviet Russia for assistance. The combined forces of the Soviet Red Army and the Mongolian People's Army launched an attack upon Urga.

The whole of Mongolia was cleared of Whiteguards. Urga was liberated and renamed Ulan-Bator-Hoto, which means "City of the Red Warrior."

In 1924, the first Great Hural, or Assembly, proclaimed Mongolia an independent People's Republic. It concluded a treaty of friend-



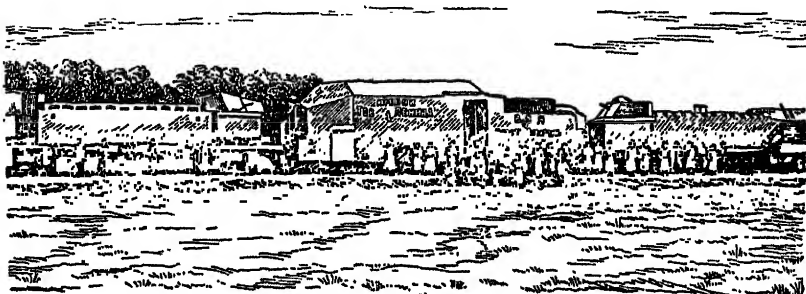
ship with the Soviet Republic. In an address to the Soviet government, the government of Mongolia expressed its gratitude to Soviet Russia for the fraternal and disinterested assistance it had rendered Mongolia. The Red Army, the liberator of the Mongolian people, was given a ceremonial send-off that continued right to the Soviet frontier.

#### 51. THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY, THE ORGANIZER OF VICTORY AT THE FRONTS

During the Civil War years the military and political alliance of the working class and the peasantry took definite shape. The same period saw the realization of an alliance between the working people of all the oppressed nationalities, under the leadership of the Russian proletariat.

The enemies of the Soviet regime were convinced that its defeat was inevitable, for the Red Army, which was formed in the course of the war, in the beginning lacked experienced commanding personnel, good weapons and the necessary quantities of ammunition. Furthermore, the interventionists had captured the parts of Russia that were richest in raw materials and food.

In spite of all this, however, the Red Army vanquished the combined forces of the foreign interventionists and the Russian bourgeois and landlord counter-revolutionaries. "The Red Army was victorious because the Soviet government's policy for which the Red Army was fighting was a right policy, one that corresponded to the interests of the people, and because the people understood and realized that it was the right policy, their own policy, and supported it unreservedly" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, p. 244).



The V. I. Lenin Armoured Train

The Red Army was victorious in the Civil War because the Red Army men understood the aims and purposes of the war and recognized their justice.

"The Red Army was victorious because its leading core, both at the front and in the rear, was the Bolshevik Party, united in its solidarity and discipline, strong in its revolutionary spirit and readiness for any sacrifice in the common cause, and unsurpassed in its ability to organize millions and to lead them properly in complex situations. . . .

"The Red Army was victorious because the Soviet Republic was not alone in its struggle against Whiteguard counter-revolution and foreign intervention, because the struggle of the Soviet government and its successes enlisted the sympathy and support of the proletarians of the whole world" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, pp. 245-246).

The Bolshevik Party trained splendid commanders and commissars who led the Red divisions and armies into battle. The heroic struggle of the Soviet people and of the Red Army was directed by the greatest geniuses in the history of mankind—Lenin and Stalin.

The Bolshevik Party, Lenin and Stalin created a body of military commissars who gave political training to the Red Army men, established indissoluble bonds between the Red Army men and their commanders and imbued them with the spirit of discipline revolutionary courage and military ardour.

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# THE TRANSITION TO THE PEACEFUL WORK OF ECONOMIC RESTORATION

## *Chapter XIII*

### THE STRUGGLE TO RESTORE THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY

#### 52. THE SOVIET STATE'S TRANSITION FROM WAR TO PEACEFUL ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION

**The International Position of Soviet Russia in 1921.** At the end of 1920, after achieving victory in the Civil War, Soviet Russia proceeded to the peaceful work of economic construction. This transition was made in an extremely tense situation.

The defeat of the Entente's military intervention fundamentally changed the international position of the Soviet Republic. Describing this situation in November 1920, Lenin said: "... We have not only a respite—we have a new stage, in which our fundamental international existence within the network of capitalist states has been won" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 485).

The Soviet Republic was recognized by a number of capitalist countries, which resumed commercial relations with our country. In 1920, peace treaties were concluded between the Soviet Republic and Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland and Poland. In 1921, the Soviet Republic concluded treaties with Persia, Afghanistan and Turkey, and trade agreements with Great Britain, Germany, Norway, Austria and Italy.

The improvement of the Soviet Republic's international position was due not only to the military victories it had achieved, but also to the strained situation in the capitalist countries. At the end of 1920, a grave economic crisis affected the capitalist world. In Europe, at the beginning of 1921, there were 10,000,000 unemployed and 30,000,000 workers working part time. Huge strikes took place in all the European countries and a movement for national liberation arose in the colonial countries. In all these countries the workers and the progressive

intelligentsia energetically came out in defence of the Soviet Republic, their watchword being "Hands off Soviet Russia!"

Under these circumstances, the governments of the capitalist countries were obliged to recognize Soviet Russia, but this did not mean that they had abandoned the struggle against the Soviets; this struggle merely assumed different forms. In the endeavour to cause the utmost ruin in the country the foreign imperialists and the Russian counter-revolutionaries sent spies and saboteurs into the country and plotted new revolts against the Soviet State.

During the whole of 1921, the foreign imperialists continued to send bandit gangs into Soviet territory. Assisted by the landlords of Poland Petliura's bands operated in the Ukraine. The bandits led by Makhno found refuge in Rumania and from there they were sent back to work against Soviet Ukraine. In Byelorussia the bands of the Polish agent Bulak-Balakhovich were rampant. In Karelia, White Finnish army officers, directed by the Finnish Baron Mannerheim, organized a counter-revolutionary revolt. In the Far East, the Japanese imperialists, jointly with the Russian Whiteguards, terrorized the inhabitants of Transbaikalia and the Maritime Region. In the heart of Soviet Russia, the agents of imperialism—the Socialist-Revolutionaries—organized a kulak bandit movement. In the Tambov Gubernia its ringleader was that bandit, the Socialist-Revolutionary Antonov, and in the Saratov Gubernia just the same sort of Whiteguard, the Socialist-Revolutionary Sapozhkov. In the Urals and in Siberia, the kulaks, organized by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, incited the peasants to resist the Soviet authorities, disrupted the supply of grain to the industrial centres, buried the grain in pits and let it rot, wrecked railways, and killed Soviet officials.

**Economic Ruin in Soviet Russia.** The seven years of war—the imperialist and civil wars—caused economic ruin in Soviet Russia to a degree that no other belligerent country experienced.

During the period of the Civil War only a ninth part of the territory of Russia remained under Soviet rule; the rest was under the heel of the different foreign interventionists who succeeded each other. The productive forces of the country were in a state of ruin. In the course of the Civil War a large part of the railway tracks and over 7,000 bridges, of which 3,500 were railway bridges, were wrecked. The damage resulting from the wrecking of industrial plants and the flooding of mines amounted to hundreds of millions of rubles, and the loss inflicted upon the entire national economy of the Land of Soviets was estimated at tens of billions of rubles. The total output of agriculture in 1920 was only a half of the pre-war amount, while the pre-war level itself was that of the poverty-stricken rural districts of tsarist Russia. In many gubernias the crop failed, and throughout the country about 20,000,000 hectares of land remained unsown. Peasant

farming was in a state of acute crisis. Industry was also ruined. The output of large-scale industry was about one-seventh of the pre-war output. The output of pig iron in 1921 amounted to only 116,300 tons, *i.e.*, about 3 per cent of the pre-war output; the amount of metal produced in Soviet Russia at that time was equal to that produced in the reign of Peter I. The output of fuel diminished. The railways were completely dislocated. The number of sound rolling stock—locomotives and cars—was only about a third of what it was before the war. Trains travelled slowly and irregularly; it took eight to ten days to travel from Moscow to Kharkov. The streets in towns were unlit at night as neither gas nor electricity was available. The tramways ceased running. Dwellings and offices were freezing in the winter owing to the absence of fuel. The country lacked the prime necessities of life: bread, fats, fuel, footwear, clothing and soap. The productivity of labour dropped. The peoples of the Land of Soviets received as a legacy from the past a country that was not only technically backward and semi-pauperized, but was also absolutely ruined.

The political situation too was extremely tense. In the winter of 1920-1921, the peasants delivered very little grain. By the end of 1920, the surplus-grain appropriations produced over 3,200,000 tons of grain and the Soviet government was able to accumulate a grain reserve. While the war was in progress, the peasants put up with the surplus-appropriations system, but on the victorious termination of the Civil War, when the danger that the landlords would return passed away and the peasants felt firmly in possession of the land, they strongly opposed this system. Furthermore, they lacked textile goods, footwear, hardware, agricultural machines, and other things they needed, and demanded that the government should supply them in exchange for the grain they delivered. But the factories were idle, and the Soviet State was unable, at that time, to supply the peasants with manufactured goods.

The situation in the country was still further complicated by the difficulties connected with the demobilization of the army and the reconversion of industry to peacetime production. Tens and hundreds of thousands of demobilized workers were unable immediately to find employment. Part of the workers went to the rural districts. The working class was becoming scattered (declassed).

The bread ration of the workers amounted to 100 grams per day, and hunger and weariness caused discontent among a section of the workers.

**The Kronstadt Mutiny.** The internal and external enemies of the Soviet regime hastened to take advantage of these economic and political difficulties. The activities of the counter-revolutionary elements—Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries, Whiteguards and

bourgeois-nationalists—revived. Posing as non-party people, they dropped their former slogan of "Down with the Soviets" and issued a new one "For the Soviets, but without Communists!" These new tactics of the class enemy found most vivid expression during the counter-revolutionary mutiny that broke out in Kronstadt in March 1921.

Kronstadt was the chief base of the Baltic Fleet. During the revolution and the Civil War, the Baltic Fleet sent many thousands of devoted revolutionary fighters to the different fronts. Among the new recruits for the navy at that time were casual individuals, frequently declassed elements, who had not been steeled by the revolution. The work of political education was at that time badly organized in the Baltic Fleet, and the Trotskyites, who managed to get into leading positions in the fleet, caused the degeneration of a group, a small one, of Communist sailors. Posing as "non-party" people the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Anarchists intensified their disruptive activities in the fleet and at a meeting of sailors held on March 1, they succeeded in securing the adoption of a counter-revolutionary resolution. Kronstadt fell into the hands of a bunch of Whiteguard agents.

The military operations of the Kronstadt mutineers were directed by Whiteguard military experts, headed by General Kozlovsky. The mutineers had the support of all the counter-revolutionary forces at home and abroad. The Whiteguard émigrés in Paris organized collections of money and provisions for the mutineers, and the American Red Cross sent food supplies to Kronstadt under its flag. The Constitutional-Democrat, Milyukov, supplied the Kronstadt counter-revolutionaries with the watchword "Soviets without Communists."

In an exposure of the manoeuvres of the class enemy Comrade Stalin said subsequently: "Soviets without Communists—such was then the watchword of the chief of the Russian counter-revolution, Milyukov. The counter-revolutionaries understood that it was not only a matter of the Soviets themselves, but, first and foremost, of who would direct them" (J. Stalin, *Articles and Speeches*, Moscow, 1934, Russ. ed., p. 217).

Kronstadt remained in the hands of the Whiteguards for seventeen days. The Committee of Defence of the Petrograd Fortified Area failed to crush the mutiny at its birth. Zinoviev negotiated with the traitors for seven whole days, thereby giving them time to fortify themselves. Picked units of the Red Army were sent to crush the Kronstadt counter-revolution. The Tenth Congress of the Party, which was in session at that time, sent 300 of its delegates, headed by K. E. Voroshilov, to reinforce them. On March 16, the revolutionary soldiers, camouflaged in white coveralls, commenced an assault upon the main forts of Kronstadt, rushing forward in spite of continuous machine-gun fire and the bursting shells which broke the

already fragile ice over which they were advancing. In the front ranks of the assault columns was Voroshilov, setting an example of Bolshevik courage and valour.

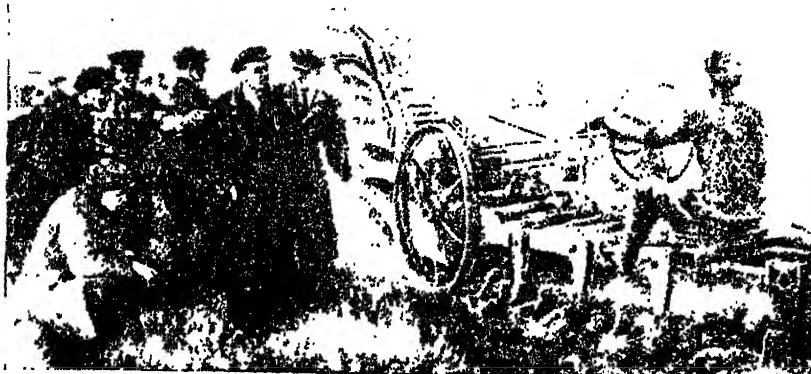
On March 17, the hotbed of counter-revolution in Kronstadt was liquidated.

**The Trade Union Discussion in the Party.** The situation in the country was still further aggravated by the fact that the unity of the Party was being undermined from within by various anti-Leninist grouplets which had revived as a consequence of the difficulties connected with the transition from war to the peaceful work of economic construction.

The Leninist Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was of the opinion that at this new stage the economic ruin in the country was as dangerous an enemy to the proletarian dictatorship as intervention and blockade had been during the period of the Civil War; that the economic chaos could be vanquished only if millions of workers and peasants were drawn into the struggle against it. The Party Central Committee considered that there was no justification for the further maintenance of the regime of War Communism called into existence by the war, and that the way to operate was not by issuing military commands but by employing methods of persuasion.

At the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921, a fierce discussion arose in the Party over the question of the role and tasks of the trade unions. The promoter of the discussion and of the struggle against Lenin was Trotsky. He demanded that "the trade unions be given a shaking up," opposed the method of persuading the masses and the development of trade union democracy, and stood for downright coercion and the issuing of orders from above in the workers' organizations. In the wake of Trotsky came the so-called "Workers' Opposition," which used this name to cover up its petty-bourgeois nature. This group demanded that the Party and the State should refrain from all interference in the economic life of the country, and that the management of the entire national economy should be transferred to an "All-Russian Producers' Congress." The "Workers' Opposition" regarded not the Party but the trade unions as the highest form of organization of the working class. Trotsky was assisted in his struggle against Lenin by Bukharin, who formed a "buffer group," and later openly united with the Trotskyites. The Trotskyites and Bukharinites tried to undermine the Party as the leading force in the proletarian state, and worked to split the working class, weaken the leadership it gave to the peasantry, and undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin countered the platforms of the opposition groups with the Party platform which declared that the trade unions are a school



V. I. Lenin at the Testing of the First Electric Plough

of administration, a school of economic management, a school of Communism. The trade unions should work by methods of persuasion, for in that way they would succeed in drawing the workers into socialist construction, in mobilizing them for the speediest liquidation of the economic chaos in the country. The Party supported Lenin; the oppositionists were utterly routed.

Comrade Stalin has described the situation in Soviet Russia on the termination of the Civil War in the following words: "Ruined by four years of imperialist war, and ruined again by three years of civil war, a country with a semi-literate population, with a low technical level, with isolated industrial oases lost in a sea of dwarf peasant farms—such was the country we inherited from the past. The task was to transfer this country from mediaeval darkness to modern industry and mechanized agriculture" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 520). This was a task of unprecedented difficulty.

**The Eighth Congress of Soviets and the GOELRO Plan.** The Soviet State exerted all efforts to remove as speedily as possible the grave domestic difficulties being experienced by the country after the termination of the Civil War.

The Eighth Congress of Soviets, which met in December 1920, drew up a whole series of measures to bring about the economic revival of the country. The congress was held in the Bolshoi Theatre, in Moscow; owing to the lack of fuel the theatre was unheated and the delegates were obliged to sit in their felt boots and overcoats. On the stage hung a huge map of the future electrification of the Land of Soviets. Small shining electric lamps indicated where electric power plants were to be built in the future. Lenin explained the importance of the plan for the electrification of the country as a means of passing from poverty and ruin to socialist construction.



On Lenin's initiative, and under his direction, there was drawn up the so-called "plan of the GOELRO" (the Russian initials of State Commission for the Electrification of Russia). Lenin's GOELRO plan was the first economic plan of the Soviet State, the prototype of Stalin's Five-Year Plans. The plan provided for the erection of thirty large power plants throughout the country within the next ten years. Comrade Stalin wrote the following to Lenin about the GOELRO plan: "It is a masterly draft of a really *unified* and really *state* economic plan. It is the only Marxist attempt made in our day to build up for the Soviet superstructure of economically backward Russia a really technical and production foundation—the only foundation feasible in the present conditions" (Lenin and Stalin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Russ. ed., p. 365).

By the electrification of the country Lenin and Stalin meant not only the building of power plants, but the gradual reorganization of the entire economy of the country, including agriculture, on the basis of modern technique, of modern large-scale machine production. Only such a reorganization, carried through by the Soviet State, could finally uproot capitalism in the country and ensure the construction of an unshakable foundation of socialist economy. Lenin said that "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VIII, Moscow, 1936, p. 276).

The Eighth Congress of Soviets called upon the working people of the Land of Soviets to work with self-sacrificing devotion to restore the country's economy, and it instituted the decoration of The Red Banner of Labour to be awarded to those who distinguished themselves on the labour front.

**Transition to the New Economic Policy.** To tear the country out of the clutches of economic ruin and successfully develop the building of Socialism, it was first of all necessary to abolish the policy of War Communism, which had been a temporary measure and no longer suited the new situation. The military-political alliance established between the working class and the peasantry during the Civil War rested on a certain economic basis—the peasants received from the workers land and protection against the landlords and the kulaks, and the workers received from the peasants grain, on loan. With the termination of the Civil War a different economic basis for this alliance was needed. The peasants had to be given the right freely to dispose of their produce.

The correct policy for the proletariat, which was exercising its dictatorship in a small-peasant country, was to give in exchange for grain the manufactured goods which the peasants needed. The tax in kind marked the transition to this policy. The law introducing a tax in kind was passed as early as the autumn of 1918,

but could not at that time be operated owing to the outbreak of the Civil War. Lenin proposed a return to the tax in kind and that tax assessments should be lower than the surplus appropriations had been.

Under this law the peasant could sell on the market all that was left over after he had made his tax deliveries to the state. Thus, he secured complete control of his surplus food stocks. To permit free trade meant a certain revival of capitalism in the country. Lenin emphasized, however, that as political power was in the hands of the working class, which also occupied the economic key positions in the country—the land, large-scale socialist industry, the transport system, and the monopoly of foreign trade—there was no danger in permitting capitalism within certain limits, and under the control of the Soviet State. When it secured a leading position in trade, the Soviet State would succeed in linking up socialist industry with peasant farming and create the conditions for liquidating capitalism in the country.

In March 1921, the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party was held. This congress adopted the historic decision to abolish the surplus-appropriations system and to introduce the tax in kind instead. This meant the adoption by the proletarian state of a new economic policy when the war was over. The New Economic Policy (NEP)—a product of Lenin's genius—was conceived by him as a plan for the transition to Socialism. The main significance and point of this plan, in his opinion, was that it fully ensured the building of the foundation of socialist economy. The struggle between Socialism and capitalism was transferred to the economic arena. Here, said Lenin, a fierce struggle lay ahead, but the country possessed all that was needed to ensure that in this struggle Socialism achieved complete victory over capitalism.

The enemies of Socialism maliciously distorted Lenin's theory of the New Economic Policy. The Trotskyites and Bukharinites argued that it was nothing but a retreat; it was in their interests to argue in this way because their line was to restore capitalism in Russia. While Lenin regarded the New Economic Policy as the road to Socialism, the Trotskyites and Bukharinites regarded it as the road to capitalism. Comrade Stalin upheld and developed Lenin's theory of the New Economic Policy as the only correct economic policy the victorious proletariat could adopt for the purpose of building Socialism. He gave the New Economic Policy the following classical definition: "NEP is a special policy of the proletarian state calculated on permitting capitalism while the key positions are held by the proletarian state, calculated on a struggle between the elements of capitalism and the elements of Socialism, calculated on an increase in the role of the socialist elements to the detriment of the capitalist elements, calculated on the victory of the socialist elements over the capitalist elements,

calculated on the abolition of classes and on the building of the foundations of socialist economy" (J. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. VII, Moscow, 1947, Russ. ed., p. 364).

The transition to the peaceful work of economic construction on the basis of the New Economic Policy marked a sharp historic turn in the policy of the Soviet State. In proclaiming this turn the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party declared that the fundamental and decisive condition for its success was the unity and solidarity of the Party.

In a resolution "On Party Unity" proposed by Lenin, the congress ordered "the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception which have been formed on the basis of one platform or another," and prohibited all factional pronouncements on pain of immediate expulsion from the Party.

The Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) also heard a report from Comrade Stalin on the national question and adopted the program that he proposed for making an actual reality of the equal rights possessed by the non-Russian nationalities.

**The First Results of NEP.** After the Tenth Congress of the Party, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars issued the first decrees giving a new direction to the economic policy of the Soviet State. By a law passed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on March 21, 1921, the surplus-appropriations system was replaced by a tax in kind, the total return from which was to be a little over half of that obtained from the surplus appropriations. On April 22, the Council of People's Commissars fixed the total amount of the tax in kind at 3,850,000 tons, as against 6,800,000 tons obtained from the surplus appropriations. The Council of People's Commissars issued a series of decrees permitting free trade in grain and withdrawing the food patrols from those gubernias which had completed their grain-surplus deliveries. The restrictions which had been imposed upon the co-operative societies with respect to the purchasing of food were removed. The co-operative societies were granted the right to purchase all kinds of agricultural produce and to lease industrial enterprises. Small artisans and handicraftsmen were granted the right freely to purchase raw materials and to sell their finished goods.

The Party launched an extensive campaign to explain its policy. On April 9, 1921, Lenin addressed a meeting of leading members of the Moscow Party organizations at which he dealt with the main question troubling large numbers of workers, namely, to what extent were free trade and individual production compatible with socialist production, and did free trade mean the abandonment of the building of Socialism in our country. In answer to these questions Lenin reminded his listeners that with the dictatorship of the pro-

letariat in force, trade, and therefore capitalism, which was permitted within certain limits, must be controlled and regulated by the proletarian state.

Lenin set the proletarian state the following task: it "must become a cautious, assiduous and shrewd 'businessman,' a punctilious *wholesale merchant*—otherwise it will never succeed in putting this small-peasant country economically on its feet" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 752).

Trade, to use Lenin's expression, was—in 1921-1922—the "link" which had to be grasped in order to pull up the whole "chain," i. e., to ensure the successful building of Socialism. "Communists," said Lenin, "must learn to trade." Some Communists said: "We were not taught to trade when we were in prison." To this Lenin answered: "There were lots of things we were not taught in prison which we were obliged to learn after the revolution, but we learned them and learned them very well" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 75).

At first, economic development proceeded slowly on the basis of the New Economic Policy, for the consequences of the Civil War, the blockade and the general state of ruin made themselves severely felt. In 1921, there was a grave failure of the harvest and 20,000,000 people starved. The Volga Region, which had been devastated by the Whiteguards, was particularly hard hit.

The Soviet government mobilized resources to assist the famine-stricken; voluntary contributions were collected all over the country, the slogan being "Ten persons who have food must feed one starving person."

The capitalist world tried to take advantage of these new difficulties, and saboteurs and spies set fire to and blew up Soviet enterprises. The American Relief Administration adapted its operations to this hostile, subversive work.

The New Economic Policy, however, strengthened the alliance between the workers and peasants. Agriculture began to revive, and the autumn sowing in 1921 was carried out successfully. Even the famine-stricken districts sowed 75 per cent of their winter crop area. Kulak banditism was wiped out, the peasants assisting the Red Army in this. Industry and transport began to be restored.

The first results of the New Economic Policy were summed up at the Ninth Congress of Soviets, which opened at the end of December 1921. The congress took a number of decisions which were to adjust the entire work of Soviet bodies and the whole of Soviet legislation to the new conditions. It proclaimed the raising of agriculture as the most important task of the period immediately ahead; it called upon industry to supply the peasants with larger quantities of manufactured goods. To demonstrate the first achievements of

agriculture it was decided to organize an agricultural exhibition in 1922.

This congress adopted a special declaration on the international position of the R.S.F.S.R., stating that world imperialism had not abandoned its designs to overthrow the Soviet State. The declaration went on to say: "The congress warns the governments of neighbouring countries that if they, in future, encroach upon or support encroachments upon the integrity of Soviet territory and the security of the Soviet Republics, the latter, in their legitimate and just defence against those who threaten the security and welfare of the republics, will be compelled to retaliate in a way that may prove fatal for the attacker and his accomplices."

### 53. THE ECONOMIC RESTORATION OF SOVIET RUSSIA

**Failure of Attempts to Conduct Economic War Against Soviet Russia.** After their plans to crush Soviet Russia by armed force had failed, the foreign imperialists began to plan economic war against her with the object of transforming her into their colony by "peaceful" means with the aid of their capital.

At a meeting of the Supreme Council of the Entente that was held at Cannes in the beginning of 1922, the British Prime Minister Lloyd George proposed that an international conference be called "to restore the vitality of the European system." In addition to the Entente countries, Germany, Austria and Soviet Russia were invited. The conference was held in Genoa in April 1922. Aiming to "restore Europe" at Soviet Russia's expense, the Entente presented the Soviet delegation with a memorandum in which it demanded the repayment of the foreign loans contracted by the tsarist government and the Provisional Government, the restitution to the foreign capitalists of their enterprises which had been confiscated by the Soviet State, and the cessation of Communist propaganda in other countries. The Soviet delegation rejected the claims of the imperialists and presented counter-claims for damage caused by the blockade and intervention. The Soviet government agreed to pay the pre-war debts, but demanded postponement for thirty years and also credits for the restoration of Russia's national economy.

The attempt to enslave the Soviet Republic failed. An attempt to form a united front of capitalist states against it also fell through. The Soviet government broke this front by concluding in Rapallo, a health resort near Genoa, a treaty with Germany establishing normal diplomatic relations with her. This took place in April 1922.

When the Genoa Conference closed, the "Russian question," on Lloyd George's proposal, was submitted to a Committee of Experts which met at The Hague in July 1922; but at The Hague the Soviet



V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin in the Summer of 1922

delegation upheld the economic independence of the Soviet Republics as vigorously as it had done in Genoa. After the Genoa and Hague Conferences the Soviet Republic's international position was greatly strengthened. Its prestige was raised particularly by the fact that the Soviet delegation at the Genoa Conference had demanded a universal reduction of armaments.

**The Offensive Undertaken on the Basis of NEP.** In his report at the Eleventh Congress of the Party that was held in March 1922, Lenin stated that the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy had been, in the main, completed. "The retreat has ended," he said, and called for the regrouping of all the forces of the Party and the Soviet State for the purpose of launching an offensive upon private capital.

Building the foundation of socialist economy meant building up a highly developed industry, for that is the foundation of Socialism; but the start had to be made with agriculture. As Comrade Stalin

wrote: "Industry cannot be developed in a vacuum, industry cannot be developed if there are no raw materials in the country, if there is no food for the workers, and if agriculture, the principal market for our industry has not to some extent been developed" (Lenin and Stalin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Moscow, Russ. ed., p. 56).

At that time there were in the U.S.S.R. 20,000,000 small, individual, peasant farms, three-fourths of which were poor farms. These small and dwarf farms were still being run on the old and backward three-field system. About 40,000,000 desyatins of land lay fallow every year. Pastures, wasteland and bog amounted to 50,000,000 desyatins. In tsarist Russia, the area of land that was left uncultivated was equal to the amount that was cultivated, namely, 90,000,000 desyatins.

In 1922-1923, agriculture showed a marked improvement. The good harvest that was reaped in 1922 enabled the gubernias which had suffered from the famine to recuperate. The peasants were successfully restoring their livestock. The Soviet government called urgently for the transition to the rotation of crops system.

The growth of the productive forces in agriculture created the basis for the rehabilitation of industry. Strict accounting was introduced into the operation of industrial enterprises. The workers began to return to the towns from the rural districts. Productivity of labour increased.

The restoration of agriculture ensured the development first of all of the light industry, i. e., those industries which produce consumers' goods. The value of the entire industrial output of Soviet Russia rose from 550,000,000 gold rubles in 1921 to 750,000,000 rubles in 1922, but the latter amounted to only 26 per cent of the pre-war output.

The old skilled workers who had preserved the factories during the Civil War were now the first to set to work to start them running again, and carried out the first assignments of the Soviet State with tremendous enthusiasm. In the spring of 1922, the Kashira Power Plant, which was built during the Civil War, was put into operation. In October of the same year, the first Soviet automobile was assembled. At that time too the first Soviet aeroplane was built.

With the transition to the New Economic Policy the investment of Russian and foreign private capital was temporarily permitted in the U.S.S.R. During the first two years about 4,000 small enterprises were leased. The Soviet State retained possession of over 4,500 large enterprises, the work of which had considerably improved.

As state industry grew and became firmly established, private capital was squeezed out, but still occupied an important place in trade, mainly in the retail trade. Here too state and co-operative

trade gradually developed and established itself in opposition to the private trader. Effect was given to Lenin's watchword of "Learn to trade!" The Party, led by Lenin, perseveringly and methodically waged the offensive against private capital within the framework of the New Economic Policy.

**The Struggle Against Counter-Revolution in the Period of Restoration.** The fact that capital had been permitted to function within certain limits gave a new impetus to the class struggle in the U.S.S.R. As Lenin wrote: "The enemy is the petty-bourgeois element which surrounds us like the air, and penetrates deep into the ranks of the proletariat. . . . The petty-bourgeois element in the country is backed by the whole international bourgeoisie, which is still world-powerful" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 740).

Having lost all hope of overthrowing Soviet rule by force of arms, the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie began to base their hopes on its degeneration under NEP conditions.

For example, the bourgeois ideologist, Professor Ustryalov, in a symposium entitled *Smena Vekh*, called upon the bourgeois intelligentsia to go into the service of the Soviet State, with a view to gaining control of the entire economic and cultural life of the country and accelerating the degeneration of the Soviet State into a bourgeois state. Dealing with the class basis of this trend, Lenin said: "The *Smena Vekh*-ites express the sentiments of thousands and tens of thousands of all sorts of bourgeois people, or of Soviet employees, who are participating in the operation of our new economic policy. This is the real and main danger" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., p. 243).

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries had utterly exposed their true character while the Civil War was still going on. Now they disguised themselves as non-party people and conducted a furious campaign against the New Economic Policy, speaking often at conferences of non-party workers.

Abroad there was a Socialist-Revolutionary terrorist organization which received funds from foreign governments for the purpose of organizing revolts in the Land of Soviets and of conducting espionage, sabotage and terrorist activities. The G.P.U. (State Political Administration), discovered an underground Socialist-Revolutionary organization. The members of this organization were arrested and brought up for trial before the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal on the charge of conducting counter-revolutionary terroristic activities against the Soviet State. The Second International sent lawyers to Moscow to defend these conspirators. The workers of Moscow met these advocates of the counter-revolution with a mighty demonstration of anger and derision. The Soviet court proved incontrovertibly the



guilt of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Without even attempting to say anything in court the lawyers of the Second International left Moscow. The Supreme Tribunal passed sentence of death on 12 of the principal culprits, but ordered that the sentence was to be carried out only if the Socialist-Revolutionary Party continued their tactics of terrorism and sedition.

The defeat of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the split in the camp of the counter-revolution, and the differentiation developing among the bourgeois intelligentsia showed that the proletarian dictatorship was becoming more and more firmly established and was successfully repelling the attacks of the counter-revolution.

#### 54. THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS .

**The Building of the Soviet System in the Non-Russian Regions of the R.S.F.S.R.** The People's Commissariat of Nationalities, which Comrade Stalin had directed since the beginning of the proletarian revolution, did a great deal to carry out the Bolshevik program of national self-determination by organizing autonomous national republics and regions and protecting the interests of the national minorities. As early as 1920, Russia was divided into administrative areas according to nationality, and the connection between the outlying regions and Central Russia assumed the concrete form of autonomous national republics united in a federation of Soviet Republics based on common defence and economic tasks.

During the period of 1920-1922 a number of autonomous Soviet Republics and autonomous regions were formed and these affiliated to the R.S.F.S.R.

The Autonomous Bashkir Republic was formed as early as March 1919. Its first act was to restore to the Bashkir peasants the land which had been seized by the landlords and kulaks under the tsar. This encouraged the nomad Bashkirs to take up agriculture and helped to convert them to a settled way of life. Bashkir schools were set up, and in 1924 there were already 2,000 Bashkir elementary schools. The Bashkir Republic incorporated the South Urals, including its industrial region, and this served as a basis for creating a Bashkir working class.

In the spring of 1920, the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Republic was formed. The First Congress of Soviets of the Tatar Republic elected a government and adopted a decision to affiliate to the Russian Soviet Federation. The Tatar Republic, which was severely affected by the crop failure and famine of 1921, received assistance from the government of the R.S.F.S.R. in restoring its agriculture. In the spring of 1921,

the Central Executive Committee of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic issued a decree making the Tatar language the official language of the Republic on a par with Russian. Under the tsar there were only 70 Russian village schools in the area of the Tatar Republic, but not a single Tatar school, except for the Mohammedan religious schools; in 1924, however, there were already in the Republic 1,700 elementary schools, conducted in the Tatar language.

In October 1920, the First Congress of Soviets of Kazakhstan proclaimed the formation of the Kirghiz Autonomous Republic on the territory of Kazakhstan. One of the first decrees issued by the Kirghiz Soviet government was that discontinuing further migration from Central Russia to Kazakhstan. This ensured security of tenure for the Kirghiz inhabitants and eased the task of converting the Kazakhs to a settled agricultural life. The Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Kirghiz Republic also issued a series of decrees concerning marriage law and abolished a number of ancient laws and customs which had perpetuated the survivals of the patriarchal-tribal system among the working people of Kazakhstan.

The Soviet State conducted similar activities in North Caucasus and in Daghestan aimed at the national emancipation of the peoples forming part of the R.S.F.S.R.

The Daghestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed at the First Daghestan Congress of Soviets, held immediately after the termination of the Civil War. The specific feature of Daghestan is that its population is divided up into numerous tribes speaking six different languages and thirty-two dialects. Before Soviet power was established many of the peoples of Daghestan had no alphabet. By 1924, however, there were already over a thousand schools in the Republic. Shortly after the establishment of Soviet power industry and agriculture began to develop in Daghestan. Irrigation canals were dug to facilitate the further development of agriculture.

The Karelian Soviet Republic was formed in the summer of 1920. The White Finns exerted all efforts to destroy the Karelian Republic. In the autumn of 1921, White Finnish bands invaded Karelia. This invasion had been organized by the heads of the Vyborg Bank and the big Finnish lumber companies.

In February 1922, the White Finns were driven out of Karelia by the Red Army with the active assistance of the Karelian peasants. After firmly establishing itself in Karelia the Soviet State proceeded to develop the immense power resources of the Karelian waterfalls. The erection of a hydroelectric power plant was soon begun on the river Konda. Education made great strides; a large number of elementary and secondary schools, conducted in the native language;

were opened. Before the revolution there were scarcely any schools in Karelia, not even Russian schools.

The Yakut Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed in 1922. Under the tsar, Yakutia had been a place of exile for revolutionaries. The inhabitants were subjected to monstrous exploitation and were dying out. The chief task of the new Yakut Soviet Republic was to regenerate the nationalities that inhabited its territory and to raise their material and cultural standards.

In addition to the Autonomous Soviet Republics, the R.S.F.S.R. included small autonomous regions possessing their own administrations, such as the Adygei, Votyak or Udmurt, Mari, Oïrot, Komi and other regions.

Soviet autonomy helped the peoples of Soviet Russia to strengthen the fraternal alliance and mutual confidence without which the proletarian state could not have existed. This mutual confidence and voluntary accord between the peoples constituting the R.S.F.S.R. gave the Russian Federation a durability that no multi-national bourgeois state could possess.

As Comrade Stalin wrote: "If the R.S.F.S.R. is the only country in the world in which the experiment in the peaceable co-existence and fraternal collaboration of a whole number of nations and peoples has succeeded, it is because it contains neither ruling nor subject peoples, neither a metropolis nor colonies, neither imperialism nor national oppression. In the R.S.F.S.R. federation rests on mutual confidence and a voluntary desire for union on the part of the toiling masses of the various nations. This voluntary character of the federation must absolutely be preserved in the future, for only a federation of this kind can serve as a transition stage to that supreme unity of the toilers of all countries in a single world economic system, the necessity for which is growing more and more palpable" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Russ. ed., 1939, p. 92).

**Formation of the U.S.S.R.** The Party's national policy, directed by Comrade Stalin, led to the close collaboration of the Soviet peoples. Six independent Soviet Republics were formed—the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Uk. S.S.R.), the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (B.S.S.R.), the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic. At first, all these Soviet Republics existed as independent states; they had their own armies, their own currency, etc. During the Civil War they combined their forces to wage a joint struggle against the interventionists and Whiteguards. When the Civil War terminated, the fraternal alliance of the Soviet Republics was still further strengthened. In December 1920, a treaty was concluded between the

Uk.S.S.R. and the R.S.F.S.R. establishing a military and economic alliance. Some of the People's Commissariats, such as the Commissariats of War and the Navy, Finance, Railways, Foreign Trade, etc., were amalgamated. Similar treaty relations were established between the R.S.F.S.R. and the other Soviet Socialist Republics—Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia.

Experience showed, however, that these ties were not enough. Economic development called primarily for the further strengthening of the alliance between the peoples. Their meagre economic resources had to be combined in order that the best use could be made of them. The economic division of labour between the different regions made the separate existence of the national republics impossible. For example, the Donetz Basin, *i. e.*, the Ukraine, was then the centre of the coal and iron and steel industry. Baku, in Azerbaijan, was the centre of the oil industry. Chiatury, in Georgia, was the centre of the manganese industry. Central Asia, *i. e.*, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, was the cotton growing region. The Moscow Region was the centre of the cotton textile industry and Petrograd of the engineering industry, and these are in the R.S.F.S.R. With such a division of labour, the building of Socialism was possible only if the national republics were economically and politically united. Unification was also dictated by the interests of defending the Soviet land. The successful activities of the joint Soviet delegation in Genoa and The Hague had proved the necessity of conducting a joint foreign policy. Unity was also prompted by the necessity of ensuring the all-round development of all the nationalities in the Soviet State, where power is based not upon the exploitation of man by man but upon uniting all the peoples to form one socialist family.

Thus, life itself dictated closer and more expedient forms of collaboration between the Soviet Republics. In March 1922, the three Transcaucasian Soviet Republics concluded among themselves a treaty of military, political and economic alliance. Thus was formed the Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. The First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets ratified the formation of the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R., set up a Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee and Council of People's Commissars, and sent a proposal to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to call a joint Congress of Soviets of the four republics—R.S.F.S.R., Transcaucasian S.F.S.R., Uk.S.S.R. and B.S.S.R.—to discuss the formation of a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Similar decisions were adopted by the All-Ukrainian and All-Byelorussian Congresses of Soviets.

On December 26, 1922, the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets unanimously supported the proposal of the non-Russian republics. The speeches delivered at this congress by the representatives of the fraternal Soviet Republics were a mighty demonstration of peo-

ples uniting voluntarily for the purpose of building Socialism. This community of tasks to be performed found splendid expression in the speech of the representative of Azerbaijan. "Azerbaijan," he said, "is embodied in the Baku proletariat. The Baku proletariat has a revolutionary history. From its ranks sprang heroes and martyrs like the twenty-six Commissars who laid down their lives in the steppes of Turkmenia for proletarian ideas. The Baku proletariat has produced leaders like Comrade Stalin. And these Baku workers, jointly with the Azerbaijan peasants, have declared ever since Azerbaijan was Sovietized, that the oil which Azerbaijan supplies to all Soviet countries is not the property of the Azerbaijan proletariat alone, but the property of the proletariat of all the Soviet countries." The Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets unanimously adopted the resolution moved by Comrade Stalin urging the necessity of forming the U.S.S.R.

The First Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was opened on December 30, 1922. In the speech he delivered at this congress, Comrade Stalin said: "But, comrades, today is not only a day of retrospect, it is also a day which marks the triumph of the new Russia over the old Russia, the Russia which was the gendarme of Europe and the hangman of Asia. Today is a day of triumph for the new Russia, which has smashed the chains of national oppression, organized victory over capital, created a dictatorship of the proletariat, awakened the peoples of the East, inspired the workers of the West, transformed the Red flag from a Party banner into a state banner, and rallied around that banner the peoples of the Soviet Republics in order to unite them into a single state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the prototype of the future World Soviet Socialist Republic" (J. Stalin, *Marrism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, p. 115). On Comrade Stalin's motion the congress unanimously adopted the declaration and treaty on the formation of the U.S.S.R., and instructed the Central Executive Committee to draft the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.

Notwithstanding his illness, Lenin devoted considerable attention to the work of forming the U.S.S.R. He approved the initiative taken in forming the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R. and called upon the Transcaucasian Communists to explain to the broad masses how necessary a federation was for the purpose of establishing national peace among the numerous peoples of Transcaucasia who, in the past, had been torn by national enmity. In greetings that he sent to the Ukrainian Congress of Soviets which had gathered to discuss the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Lenin stressed the world-historical importance of the fraternal union of the peoples. In a speech made in 1922 Lenin said that questions concerning nationalities are such as "for hundreds of years have occupied the European states and as have been settled

only to an infinitesimal degree in democratic republics. We are settling them, and we need somebody to whom the representative of any nation can go and give a detailed account of what is wanted. Where can we find such a man? . . ." He went on to say that the only suitable man for this job was Comrade Stalin who, as People's Commissar of Nationalities, had without interruption directed the work of forming the fraternal union of Soviet Republics. "Nobody," he added, "... could name a candidate other than Comrade Stalin" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, Moscow, 1937, Russ. ed., pp. 263-264).

Comrade Stalin rendered enormous service in bringing about the formation of the U.S.S.R. and in drawing up the first Constitution of the Soviet Union.

**The First Constitution of the U.S.S.R.** The structure of the Soviet State and of its organs, and the rights and duties of Soviet citizens were defined in the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. The Constitution was finally ratified by the Second Congress of Soviets in January 1924. Every Union Republic had its own Constitution. The Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R., like the Constitutions of the other Union Republics, set itself the task of "guaranteeing the dictatorship of the proletariat with the object of suppressing the bourgeoisie, of abolishing the exploitation of man by man and of bringing about Communism. . . ."

According to the Union Constitution, the supreme organ of the U.S.S.R. was the Congress of Soviets of the Union. In the intervals between congresses, the supreme organ of Soviet power was the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. The Central Executive Committee consisted of two Chambers—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. All the republics, irrespective of the number of their inhabitants, were given the right to send an equal number of representatives to the Soviet of Nationalities.

The Union and Autonomous Republics set up their own Councils of People's Commissars.

According to the 1924 Constitution of the U.S.S.R. the right to elect and be elected to Soviets was granted to all citizens of both sexes who had reached the age of eighteen on election day, irrespective of religion, race, nationality or domicile. Only those citizens were deprived of electoral rights who exploited hired labour, private traders, ministers of religion, former police officers and gendarmes and also those sentenced by a court to deprivation of political rights.

Thus, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics constituted an entirely new type of state, one which ensures the unity and friendship of the peoples inhabiting it in the work of building Socialism and of defending the state against the imperialists, ensures the free national development of the peoples, their independence and constructive ini-

tiative in their internal affairs. Every republic was guaranteed the right freely to secede from the Union if it so desired, and affiliation to the Union was open to all existing Soviet Socialist Republics, as well as to those which might arise in the future.

## 55. LENIN'S BEHESTS

**Lenin's Last Public Utterances.** In the spring of 1922, Lenin fell seriously ill. After the Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) the Central Committee of the Party elected Comrade Stalin as its General Secretary. The Party and the working class regarded Comrade Stalin as Lenin's militant and tried comrade-in-arms, his most faithful disciple, and the continuator of his cause.

In October 1922, Lenin's health somewhat improved and he resumed his functions for a short time. He presided at the meetings of the Council of People's Commissars, attended the meetings of the Party Central Committee and spoke at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. On November 15, 1922, he delivered a report at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, in which he summed up the five years of the revolution in Russia and the prospects of the world revolution. Lenin said: "The peasants realize that we captured power for the workers and that our aim is to create a socialist system with the aid of this power. Therefore, the economic preparation for socialist economy was most important for us. We could not do this in a direct way. We had to do it in a roundabout way" (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. X, Moscow, 1938, p. 329).

Lenin amplified this idea at a plenary session of the Moscow Soviet held on November 20, 1922, when he stressed with even greater emphasis that in the conditions prevailing in Russia, the New Economic Policy was the only road to Socialism. He concluded his speech by expressing the firm conviction that "... We shall all, not in one day, but in the course of several years, all of us together, fulfil this task, come what may; and NEP Russia will be transformed into Socialist Russia" (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, 3rd Russ. ed., p. 366).

This was Lenin's last public speech. His illness took a grave turn for the worse. In January and February 1923, hurrying to take advantage of every moment between the attacks of his illness, he managed to dictate his last testament to the Party and to the country. It was contained in his articles "Pages from a Diary," "On Co-operation," "Our Revolution," "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection," and "Better Fewer, but Better."

These articles of Lenin taught the Party and the working class how to use the New Economic Policy as a means of building Socialism in our country, surrounded as it is by capitalist countries. In the

article "How We Should Reorganize the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" he urged the necessity of preserving and strengthening the unity of the Party, as the vital condition for the further success of the proletarian dictatorship. In his last article, "Better Fewer, but Better," he urged the necessity of strengthening the alliance between the working class and the peasantry and of achieving the utmost development of large-scale machine industry, the basis of Socialism. As he put it figuratively, it was necessary to change "from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty . . . to the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of Volkhovstroy, etc." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Two-Vol. ed., Vol. II, Moscow, 1947, p. 855.) In all his last articles and speeches Lenin gave concrete directions as to how this was to be accomplished.

He was of the opinion that Socialism could be achieved in agriculture by uniting the individual peasant farms to form co-operative farms, and by reorganizing agriculture on the basis of machine industry and electrification. In his article "On Co-operation" he showed that the Land of Soviets possessed all that was needed to build complete socialist society. Amplifying his co-operative plan, Lenin showed that the medium through which the peasants were to be drawn into socialist construction was co-operation; but complete co-operation and the transition to Socialism could not be achieved without a cultural revolution, for the cultural backwardness of the peasants was the most serious obstacle to the socialist re-organization of agriculture.

Lenin called for the raising of cultural standards in the U.S.S.R. and in this regard urged that a start should be made by abolishing that shameful survival of tsarism—illiteracy. The standard of literacy in Russia was still far below that of the more cultured countries in Western Europe. In 1920, the rate of literacy in Russia was 319 per 1,000 and in some districts it was even lower. Lenin demanded that school-teachers should be placed on a level on which they had never stood nor ever could stand in bourgeois society.

The main points of Lenin's great plan for the building of Socialism in our country may be enumerated as follows: having seized power, hold the key positions in the economic life of the country; place the country's economy on the basis of modern advanced technique; build socialist industry and by means of it technically re-equip agriculture; organize the peasants in co-operative societies and convert small individual backward agriculture into large-scale collective socialist agriculture; secure the economic independence of the Land of Soviets and build up its defences; strengthen the U.S.S.R. as the base of the struggle for Socialism all over the world.

**The Twelfth Congress of the Bolshevik Party.** In March 1923, Lenin suffered a severe relapse. He was taken to the village of Gorki near



Moscow. His condition roused grave apprehensions. The entire people waited anxiously every morning for the bulletin of their leader's health.

In April 1923, while Lenin was ill, the Twelfth Congress of the Party was held. The proceedings were directed by Comrade Stalin. In its decisions the congress took into account all the directives Lenin had given in his last articles and letters.

The congress strongly rebuffed all those who interpreted the New Economic Policy as a retreat from the socialist position and wanted to divert the development of the Land of Soviets to the path of the restoration of capitalism. The Trotskyites and Bukharinites proposed that vital branches of industry should be leased to foreign capitalists, and Trotsky even wanted to have the Putilov and Bryansk Plants closed because they were not showing a profit. Trotsky's supporters tried to thrust upon the Party the disastrous policy of disrupting the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. They proposed that industry should be developed by exploiting the peasants. They also proposed that the debts contracted by the tsar's government should be paid to the foreign capitalists and that the monopoly of foreign trade be abandoned.

The Twelfth Congress of the Bolshevik Party unanimously rejected and condemned all these defeatist proposals of the Trotskyites and Bukharinites. It proposed that industry should be developed not at the expense of the peasants, but in close conjunction with them. The congress devoted considerable attention to problems concerning the policy of the Soviet State on the national question.

The reporter on this subject was Comrade Stalin, who unfolded a broad program of measures for abolishing the economic and cultural inequality that existed among the peoples of the Soviet Union. He particularly emphasized that the Russian proletariat, who had rendered the oppressed nationalities fraternal assistance in their struggle against their enslavers, should now render them "real, systematic, sincere and genuine proletarian assistance" in economic and cultural development. "The Russian proletariat," he said, "must take every necessary measure to establish centres of industry in these republics" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, pp. 137-138). The congress denounced the Georgian national-deviators who had opposed the formation of the Transcaucasian Federation and the cementing of friendship among the Transcaucasian people. The Trotskyites and Bukharinites supported these Georgian nationalists.

**The Foreign Imperialists Attempt to Drag the U.S.S.R. into War.** The foreign imperialists resolved to take advantage of the grave situation created in the country and in the Party by Lenin's illness and, by means of new acts of provocation, tried to drag the U.S.S.R. into war and thus disrupt the work of socialist construction.

Foreign spies developed extensive espionage and sabotage activities in the U.S.S.R. The Soviet government had a number of British spies arrested and deported them. Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, sent the Soviet government an ultimatum demanding "damages" for the arrest of the spies, that the Soviet plenipotentiary representatives be recalled from Persia and Afghanistan because of their alleged anti-British activities, and that British fishermen be permitted to fish off the Soviet coasts. The ultimatum was accompanied by a threat of new intervention.

The bourgeois press in Great Britain and France launched a fierce anti-Soviet campaign. Encouraged by Curzon's ultimatum, the dregs of the various Whiteguard gangs abroad became active again. In May 1923, V. V. Vorovsky, the Soviet representative in Italy, a most prominent Bolshevik and outstanding Soviet diplomat, was assassinated while in Switzerland, by a Whiteguard.

The working people of the U.S.S.R. answered Curzon's ultimatum and the assassination of Vorovsky with huge protest demonstrations in which they expressed their determination to resist. All over the country funds were collected for the construction of an aircraft squadron which was named "Ultimatum." At that time also the society known as the Friends of the Air Fleet was inaugurated.

In answer to all acts of provocation the Soviet government sent a note containing the categorical warning that "the position of the Soviet Republic has not, cannot have, nor will have anything in common with dependence upon the will of a foreign government."

Curzon's act of provocation roused a storm of protest and indignation among the British workers, and the Conservative government was forced to resign. At the end of 1923, the so-called "Labour government," headed by Ramsay MacDonald, came into office in Great Britain, and in February 1924, yielding to the demands of the British workers, the MacDonald government recognized the Soviet government and established diplomatic relations with it.

**The Difficulties of Restoring the National Economy.** International complications were aggravated by the difficulties of restoring the national economy. The growth of industry lagged behind the country's requirements. At the end of 1923, there were about a million unemployed in the country. In July 1923, the Supreme Council of National Economy, which was headed by the Trotskyite Pyatakov, issued an order to the State Trusts to make the highest possible profit by raising the prices of manufactured goods. The price paid for grain, on the other hand, was kept at a low level.

The result was that the peasants found it difficult to buy manufactured goods and the factories had no market for their products. Co-operative and state trade lacked working capital. The Soviet currency became unstable. This affected the economic position of the workers

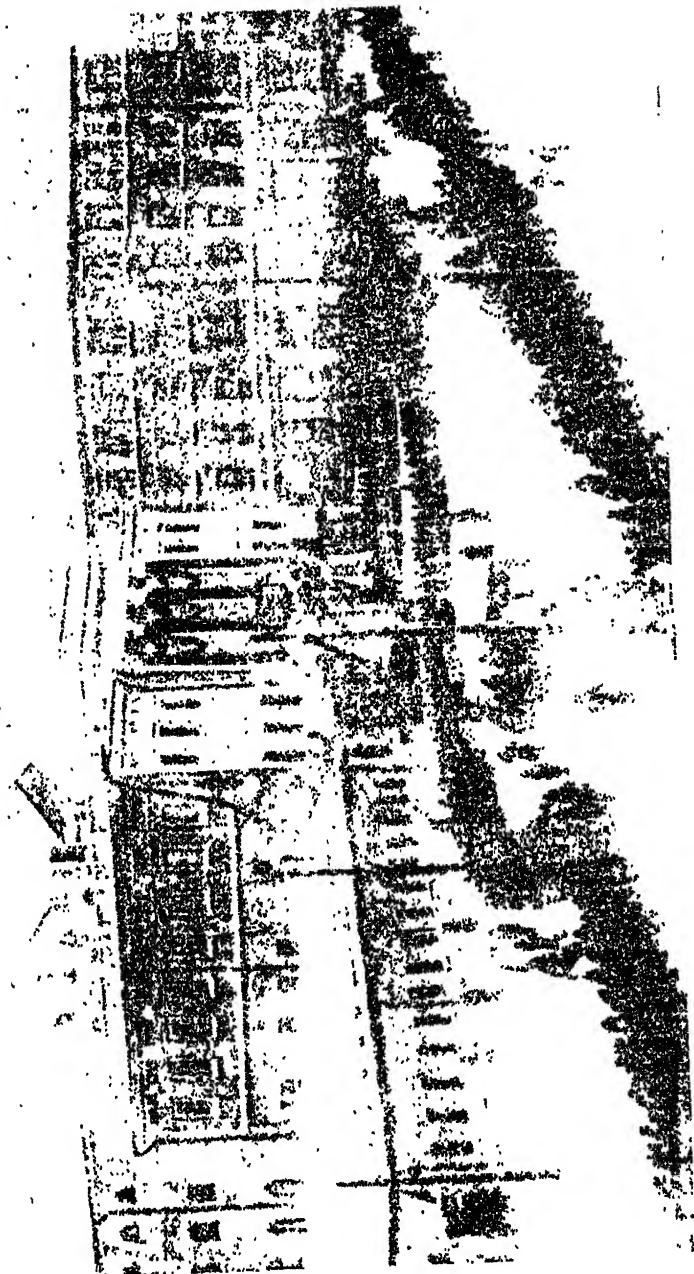
and peasants. The Trotskyites declared that these temporary economic difficulties were indicative of a "crisis" of the whole economic system of the U.S.S.R. under the New Economic Policy.

At this time the Soviet government was exerting efforts to reform the currency by replacing the depreciated paper currency with chervontsi, or ten-ruble notes, having a firm gold backing. The Trotskyites sabotaged this financial reform by issuing orders to raise the prices of manufactured goods and declared that the reform and stabilization of the currency was unprofitable for industry. Instead of reducing prices, the Trotskyites advocated "commodity intervention," that is to say, the purchase abroad of deficient goods. As a means of obtaining funds they advocated the raising of taxes, the raising of prices of manufactured goods, and so forth. Their object in pressing for these measures was to frustrate the building of Socialism, which had successfully begun, to cause a rupture between the working class and the peasants, and to convert the economy of the U.S.S.R. into an appendage of capitalist Europe.

Taking advantage of the aggravation of the international situation, the economic difficulties in the U.S.S.R. and of Lenin's illness, the Trotskyites began secretly to rally the remnants of the defeated anti-Leninist groups for another attack upon the Party. They were joined by the "Democratic Centralists," remnants of the "Workers' Opposition," former "Left Communists," Menshevik types expelled from the Party, and similar scum, who were united by their common hatred for the Leninist Central Committee of the Party.

In the autumn of 1923, the Trotskyites dragged the Party into another fierce discussion, but the Party rallied around Comrade Stalin who was fighting for Leninism against Trotskyism. The Trotskyites were exposed and defeated. The platform of the Trotskyite opposition was unanimously condemned and defined as a petty-bourgeois deviation, as the revision of Leninism.

**Death of Lenin.** As he laid the foundation stones of socialist society Lenin dreamed of seeing backward, ruined, wretched and impotent Russia replaced by a new, mighty and happy land of flourishing Socialism. He was destined, however, to see only the very first, comparatively small, successes of the grand reconstruction of the Soviet Union that he had planned. He who had caused such mighty transformations to take place was struck down by death at the very beginning of the historic road taken by our country towards the victory of Socialism. From the beginning of his conscious life to the day he drew his last breath, Lenin had devoted himself entirely to the cause of the revolution. The enormous, superhuman labours of this greatest man of our age had sapped his health, and his death was hastened by the severe wounds that had been inflicted upon him by the vicious bullets of the enemies of the revolution.



Working People Taking Their Last Leave of V. I. Lenin in the House of Trade Unions, Moscow

V. I. Lenin passed away on January 21, 1924. The death of the leader filled the hearts of millions with grief. In its manifesto to the Party and to all the working people announcing the death of our great leader, the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) stated: "Never since Marx has the great proletarian movement for emancipation produced such a titanic figure as our late leader, teacher and friend."

Briefly and concisely describing Lenin's greatness and the gigantic work he performed, the manifesto went on to say: "Lenin possessed all the truly great and heroic virtues of the proletariat—a fearless mind, an iron, inflexible and indomitable will which surmounts all obstacles, a holy and mortal hatred of slavery and tyranny, revolutionary ardour which moves mountains, boundless faith in the creative powers of the masses, and vast organizing talent. His name has become the symbol of the new world from West to East, and from South to North."

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party called upon the working class to mark the death of their leader by mustering all their strength to carry out Lenin's behests.

In the factories talks were delivered on the life of Lenin, after which the workers passed the curt but emphatic resolution: "We vow to carry out Lenin's behests."

The workers of the Third Moscow Printing Plant, in sending a delegation to the funeral of their leader, handed it a banner bearing the inscription: "Let us form a solid ring round the Communist Party and carry out Ilych's behests to the last!"

At a meeting held at the Moskvoretsky Textile Mills an old woman weaver mounted the platform and in a voice trembling with emotion said: "If I have wavered till now, thinking that I was almost illiterate and without training, then during these last days I have unhesitatingly decided to join the Party created by our infinitely beloved Ilyich. May he rest in peace in his grave; we millions, the workers, will carry the cause begun by him to the end."

During those hours of grief hundreds of thousands of proletarians all over the country, like this old Moscow weaver, handed in applications to join Lenin's Party.

At memorial meetings the workers passed resolutions pledging themselves to carry out Lenin's behests and to send their best sons to reinforce the Party.

The men in the Red Army passed similar resolutions. A meeting of Red Army men and commanders of the Sivash Division declared: "We must now guard not only our Red frontiers, but also the inviolability of the grave of our great leader and teacher."

Lenin's death caused profound grief and mourning in the settlements of the Yakuts, in the camps of the nomad Nenets reindeer breeders, and in the villages of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The

working people in the most remote parts of the country sent delegations to Moscow to attend Lenin's funeral. The peasants in the Volga Region collected grain for a fund to build a monument to Lenin. The workers and peasants named towns, streets, factories and villages after Lenin. At the request of the workers, Petrograd, where Lenin had commenced his revolutionary activities as the leader of the proletariat and where he had led the working class in a victorious insurrection and to the capture of power, was named in his honour, Leningrad.

On January 23, the peasants from the villages surrounding Gorki, where Lenin died, accompanied their friend and teacher on his last journey to Moscow. The workers of Moscow took their last leave of Lenin. For five days and nights a continuous stream of people flowed through the Column Hall of the House of Trade Unions, where Lenin lay in state. Millions of working people waited their turn to bid their leader a last farewell.

**Stalin's Vow.** On the death of our beloved leader, Comrade Stalin, in the name of the Party and of the whole Soviet people, took a great vow to carry out Lenin's behests.

At the Second Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. on January 26, 1924, Comrade Stalin said:

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to hold high and guard the purity of the great title of member of the Party. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will fulfil your behest with credit! . . .

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard the unity of our Party as the apple of our eye. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest too, we will fulfil with credit! . . .

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to guard and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will spare no efforts to fulfil this behest too, with credit! . . .

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to strengthen with all our might the alliance of the workers and the peasants. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest too, we will fulfil with credit! . . .

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to consolidate and extend the Union of Republics. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that this behest, too, we will fulfil with credit! . . .

"More than once did Lenin point out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. . . . Let us vow then, comrades, that we will spare no effort to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy. . . .

"Departing from us, Comrade Lenin adjured us to remain faithful to the principles of the Communist International. We vow to you, Comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our lives to strengthen and

extend the Union of the toilers of the whole world—the Communist International!” (*Stalin on Lenin*, Moscow, 1946, pp. 30-36.)

Stalin's great vow became the program of action of the Party and the Soviet State which ensured our country's victorious progress along the road to Socialism.

At 4 p. m. on January 27, amid the thunder of an artillery salute, the body of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was placed in the Mausoleum erected during those days in the Red Square, Moscow. A last and mournful salute to the leader was sounded by sirens and hooters. Life throughout the country came to a standstill for the space of five minutes. Trains stopped in their tracks, the buzz of machinery in the factories was silenced. Five minutes of silence was also observed by working people in all capitalist countries.

## 56. THE END OF THE PERIOD OF RESTORATION IN THE U.S.S.R.

**The First Year Without Lenin.** On the death of Lenin the working class of the U.S.S.R. rallied more closely than ever around Lenin's Party. Thousands of workers handed in applications to join its ranks in order the better to carry out the behests of the departed leader. The Central Committee proclaimed a mass admission of advanced workers into the Party's ranks. Over 240,000 of the most class-conscious and revolutionary workers made up the "Lenin Enrolment" into the Party. Interest in the study of Leninist theory increased to an enormous degree. "Lenin is dead, but Leninism lives!" said the workers, and sought to acquire a better knowledge of the principles of Lenin's teachings.

To satisfy this urge, Comrade Stalin, in the beginning of April 1924, delivered a series of lectures on "The Foundations of Leninism" at the "Sverdlov" Communist University. In these lectures, which shortly afterwards were published in book form, he gave a systematic exposition of Lenin's great teachings about the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the historical roots and theory of Leninism, of Lenin's teachings about the Party, and of his views on the peasant and the national and colonial questions. He emphasized that Leninism was not only a Russian but an international doctrine. Leninism not only revived the revolutionary teachings of Marx and Engels, which had been distorted by the opportunists of the Second International, but developed them further, enriching them with the new experience of the proletarian class struggle in the epoch of imperialism. "Leninism," said Comrade Stalin, "is Marxism of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution." This splendid book, which is a further development of the Marxian theory, armed ideologically the working class of the U.S.S.R.

Помните, любите, изучайте  
Ленина, нашего учителя, нашего вождя  
борьбы и побеждающие вра-  
гов, внутренних и внешних, — по  
Ленину.

Стройте новую жизнь, новую  
жизнь, новую культуру — по Ленину  
Никогда не отказывайтесь от  
малого труда, ибо из малого стро-  
ится великое, — в этом один из  
важных заветов Ленина.

И. Сталин

Remember, love and study Lenin, our teacher and leader.

Fight and vanquish the enemies, internal and foreign—as Lenin taught us.

Build the new life, the new existence, the new culture—as Lenin taught us.

Never refuse to do the little things, for from little things are built the  
big things—this is one of Lenin's important behests.

J. STALIN

Facsimile of the Letter J. V. Stalin Wrote to *Rabochaya Gazeta*  
Urging the Need to Study Leninism



and of the whole world in their struggle for Socialism. Comrade Stalin's book *The Foundations of Leninism*, also played an enormous part in bringing about the ideological defeat of Trotskyism.

In May 1924, the Thirteenth Congress of the Party was held. At this congress Trotsky hypocritically stated that he and his followers were giving up the factional struggle. Actually, he had instructed his followers to make declarations about renouncing Trotskyism while in fact forming a counter-revolutionary underground organization.

The Thirteenth Congress emphasized that the operation of the Party line laid down by Lenin at the time of the adoption of the New Economic Policy had strengthened the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry and had created the conditions for the speedy liquidation of economic ruin. The congress called for assistance for the rural districts, for the organization of the rural poor and for the formation of peasant mutual-aid committees. While demanding an intensification of the struggle against the kulaks and an improvement in activity among the poor and middle peasants, the congress confirmed the line of developing the co-operative movement as a means of achieving Socialism. The congress indicated measures for improving the work of the state trading organizations and co-operative societies, which under the New Economic Policy were to help in establishing the link between industry and peasant farming.

The New Economic Policy created a considerable revival in the country after the ruin which had been caused by war and intervention.

From 1924 to 1925 total industrial output increased 60 per cent and the number of workers employed in industry increased 27 per cent. The material conditions of the working class improved.

The currency reform of 1924 introduced a stable currency in place of the former depreciated paper money and strengthened the financial position of the Soviet State.

The revival of state and co-operative trade increased the proportion of the socialist forms of economy in the total economy of the country. Soviet trade began to squeeze the private trader out of the market. Peasant farming showed a marked improvement. The Soviet government rendered the working peasantry considerable assistance. In the period from 1924 to 1925 the state assigned out of its limited resources 290,000,000 rubles for the purpose of assisting the poorer peasants.

The Soviet Union's successes during the four years of the operation of the New Economic Policy were achieved in a stubborn struggle against the resisting capitalist elements. In an endeavour to exploit the discontent of the peasant masses caused by the shortage of manufactured goods, the high prices of these goods, and the survivals of

"War Communism" that persisted in some parts of the rural districts, the kulaks tried to organize revolts.

The elections to the Soviets which took place at this time revealed that in a number of districts the middle peasants were inclined to swing over to the side of the kulaks. Comrade Stalin set the task of rallying the middle peasants around the proletariat and of enlisting the masses of the peasants in the work of building up the Soviets. At a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Party held on October 26, 1924, he said: "All those who are active, honest, possess initiative and are politically conscious, especially former Red Army men, who are politically the most conscious and possess most initiative among the peasants, must be drawn into the work of the Soviets."

The Soviets are bodies which establish a bond between the working class and peasantry, with the proletariat playing the leading role. Hence, enlivening and strengthening the Soviets meant strengthening the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in the joint struggle for Socialism.

**Strengthening the Alliance Between the Proletariat of the U.S.S.R. and the Peasants of the Non-Russian Republics.** After the U.S.S.R. was formed, the Russian proletariat increased its assistance to the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and thereby strengthened its alliance with the peasants in the non-Russian regions. The task of uniting the peoples in a single, fraternal union of state was hindered by three factors, *viz.*, the actual inequality existing between the different nationalities, the dominant-nation chauvinism of a section of the Russian Communists, and local nationalism. The Tenth and Twelfth Congresses of the Party, after hearing reports by Comrade Stalin, adopted a program of measures for combating the still existing actual inequality between the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

Under the New Economic Policy there was a revival and growth of dominant-nation chauvinism, a reflection of the former privileged position of the Great-Russians. This chauvinism found expression in the neglect shown by certain Soviet and Party officials towards the needs and requirements of the non-Russian republics, and threatened to undermine the confidence of the peasant masses of the non-Russian areas in the U.S.S.R. towards the proletariat, which was exercising its dictatorship.

At the same time, there was a revival of local nationalism among the peoples who had not yet forgotten the national oppression they had suffered from Russian tsarism and the Russian bourgeoisie. The local nationalists sowed distrust in everything Russian, and tried to disrupt the alliance between the peasants of the non-Russian republics and the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. which was leading the struggle for Socialism in all the Soviet Republics.

In June 1923, the Central Committee of the Party held a joint

conference with responsible officials from the non-Russian republics and regions. This conference, which was directed by Comrade Stalin, emphatically condemned both dominant-nation chauvinism and the nationalistic tendencies of individual Party members. At this conference there were exposed a group of Tatar bourgeois nationalists and a group of Uzbek nationalists.

The bourgeois-nationalists had become agents of foreign imperialism and conducted subversive activities with the object of disrupting the work of building up the Soviet system in the border regions. The Georgian Mensheviks, assisted by the foreign imperialists, even attempted to rouse the peasants of Georgia to revolt against the Soviets. In the summer of 1924, they captured Chiatury, the centre of the manganese industry in Georgia, dispersed the Soviets in Guria and other districts, and began to organize kulak and landlord fighting detachments. The Georgian peasantry, however, far from allowing themselves to be drawn into this reckless venture of the Georgian Mensheviks, resolutely helped in liquidating it in the course of a few days. The organizers of this revolt—a group of prominent Georgian Mensheviks—were tried before a Soviet court and met with well-deserved punishment.

The Soviet government rendered the peoples of the non-Russian republics considerable economic, organizational and cultural assistance. A number of factories, with all their equipment, were transferred from Moscow to Georgia, Bokhara and Uzbekistan. Loans were granted to the industries and co-operative societies in the various republics. In all the non-Russian regions a drive was launched to enliven and strengthen the Soviets.

**The National Delimitation of Central Asia.** When the Soviet Republics in Turkestan were firmly established their national delimitation was carried into effect. The tsarist government, in introducing its administrative division of the country, had taken no account of the specific national features and the territorial distribution of the peoples inhabiting it. The result was that the old boundaries of gubernias and regions brought together into administrative units territories populated by different nationalities, and split up homogeneous nationalities. Particularly scattered about were the peoples of Central Asia. Some of the peoples had no administrative centre, republic or region of their own, and this hindered their economic and cultural development.

In 1924, all the peoples of Central Asia reached a voluntary agreement and established an absolutely new political and administrative division of Central Asia, one that took into account the economic and political interests of each nation. Two Union Soviet Socialist Republics were formed—the Uzbek and Turkmen Republics. Later, a third one, the Tajik Republic, was formed, being detached from the Uzbek

S.S.R., of which it had till then been a part, as an autonomous republic. Two autonomous Soviet Republics were also formed, namely, the Kirghiz and the Kara-Kalpak Republics. The part of Northeastern Turkestan inhabited by Kazakhs was incorporated in Kazakhstan. In the autumn of 1924, the Congresses of Soviets of Bokhara and Khiva resolved to rename their People's Republics, Socialist Republics. The Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. ratified the decision of the peoples of Central Asia regarding national delimitation. The Uzbek and Turkmen Republics joined the U.S.S.R. as Union Republics.

In an estimation of the importance of national delimitation, Comrade Stalin wrote: "The time has now come when these scattered fragments can be *reunited* into independent states, so that the toiling masses of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan can be united and welded with the organs of government. The delimitation of frontiers in Turkestan is primarily the *reunion* of the scattered parts of these countries into independent states. The fact that these states then desired to join the Soviet Union as equal members thereof, merely signifies that the Bolsheviks have found the key to the profound aspirations of the masses of the East, and that the Soviet Union is the only voluntary union of the toiling masses of various nationalities in the world" (J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*, Moscow, 1940, pp. 182-183).

Thus, for the first time in their history, the Uzbek, Turkmen and Tajik peoples were able to unite in their national states. This they did on the basis of Soviet power, which is cherished and understood by the masses. National delimitation strengthened the alliance between the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. and the toiling peasantry of Central Asia and stimulated the economic and cultural development of the peoples of Soviet Central Asia.

## *Chapter XIV*

# THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION (1926-1929)

## 57. STEERING A COURSE FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION

**The Soviet Republic's International Position Is Strengthened.**  
After the prolonged post-war revolutionary crisis, world capitalism entered a phase of temporary, partial stabilization. As a result of the defeat of the revolutionary movement in 1923, counter-revolutionary *coups* were carried out in Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and Po-

land. The tide of revolution temporarily subsided in Western Europe and capitalism partially stabilized its position. This partial stabilization of capitalism intensified the antagonisms between the different capitalist countries and also between the workers and capitalists in each country. A desire to form a united front against the offensive of capital arose among the proletarian masses in the capitalist countries. Delegations of foreign workers streamed into the U.S.S.R.

Comrade Stalin made the following comment: "At the one pole we find capitalism stabilizing itself, consolidating the position it has reached and continuing its development. At the other pole we find the Soviet system stabilizing itself, consolidating the position it has won and marching forward on the road to victory. Who will defeat whom?—That is the essence of the question" (J. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1934, p. 152).

The successes which the working class of the U.S.S.R. achieved on the economic front strengthened and consolidated the Soviet Union's international position. In 1924 and in the beginning of 1925, Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and many other bourgeois countries officially recognized the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1924, a "General Treaty between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R." was signed, but the reactionary British bourgeoisie launched a campaign against this, their argument being that "Great Britain had surrendered to Bolshevism."

**The Program for Building Socialism in the U.S.S.R.** The process of restoring the national economy of the U.S.S.R. was drawing to a close. In 1925-1926, agriculture in the U.S.S.R. reached the pre-war level and produced 103 per cent of the pre-war output. The volume of industrial output also approached the pre-war level. But it was not enough for the Land of Soviets, which was building Socialism, merely to restore its economy, merely to reach the pre-war level, for that was the level of a backward and poverty-stricken country. It was necessary to go beyond that.

At the end of April 1925, the Fourteenth Conference of the Party was held. Guided by Lenin's thesis that Socialism could be victorious in one country, the conference passed a resolution which stated that the Party "must exert all efforts to build socialist society in the conviction that this work of construction can be, and certainly will be, successful if we succeed in safeguarding the country against all attempts at restoration."

In substantiating Lenin's thesis that Socialism could be victorious in our country, Comrade Stalin repeatedly emphasized that it was necessary to distinguish between two aspects of this question, namely, the domestic and the international aspect.

The domestic aspect of the question was the relationships between the classes within the country: the country possessed all that was

needed to build complete socialist society; the working class, which had established its political dictatorship and had converted the land, factories, mills, banks and means of communication into public property, could now further socialist construction and, relying on its alliance with the peasantry, economically rout capitalism within the country.

But there was also an international aspect to the question of the victory of Socialism. For the time being the U.S.S.R. was the only socialist country in the world; it still existed in a capitalist encirclement, and this was fraught with the danger of capitalist intervention. Complete guarantees against intervention could be provided only by the victory of Socialism on an international scale. Hence, the final victory of Socialism, meaning that it was guaranteed against intervention, was possible only if the proletarian revolution was victorious in a number of countries. If the world revolution was delayed, the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. could overcome the economic and technical backwardness of the country and ensure its independence only by its own internal forces and resources, by creating the industrial basis for Socialism and reconstructing the national economy on socialist lines.

The Fourteenth Conference of the Party emphatically condemned Trotsky's theory that the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. was impossible, and called upon the working class to work with the utmost strain to ensure this victory. In May 1925, Comrade Stalin delivered a report in which, summing up the proceedings of this conference, he substantiated and amplified Lenin's teachings regarding the possibility of the victory of Socialism, and formulated the program for the building of Socialism in the following few words: "We need from fifteen to twenty million industrial proletarians; we need the electrification of the principal regions of our country; we need the organization of agriculture on a co-operative basis; we need a highly developed metal industry. Then we need fear no danger. Then we shall be victorious on an international scale" (Lenin and Stalin, *Selected Works*, Vol. III, Russ. ed., p. 27).

The decisions of the Fourteenth Party Conference served as the basis for the proceedings of the Third All-Union Congress of Soviets which opened on May 13, 1925. The congress discussed the following reports: the state of industry; measures to raise and strengthen peasant farming; agricultural co-operative societies; building up the Soviets, and the Red Army. The congress passed a series of measures to improve the work of the Soviets. It also ratified the admission into the U.S.S.R. of the two new Union Republics—the Turkmen S.S.R. and the Uzbek S.S.R. and in doing so emphasized that "the entry of the afore-mentioned republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is fresh proof that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

is indeed a voluntary union of equal nations and a reliable bulwark of the formerly oppressed nations" (*The Congresses of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.—Decisions and Resolutions*, Moscow, 1939, Russ. ed., p. 78).

The congress devoted special attention to the problem of strengthening the defensive capacity of the country and the Red Army. In the resolution adopted on the report of M. V. Frunze it emphasized the general strengthening of the international position of the U.S.S.R. and went on to say: "The Third Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics deems it necessary to declare to the working people of the Soviet Union and of the whole world that notwithstanding the efforts of the Workers' and Peasants' Government, and notwithstanding the treaties and agreements already concluded with a number of countries, the Soviet Union is not guaranteed against attempts on the part of world capital to disturb the peaceful labours of the workers and peasants" (*The Congresses of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.—Decisions and Resolutions*, Moscow, 1939, Russ. ed., p. 82).

The congress approved the reform of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. carried out by the People's Commissariat of Military and Naval Affairs and which helped still further to improve the fighting efficiency of the Red Army and the Red Navy.

In the congress' decision on M. V. Frunze's report the government was instructed to strengthen the defensive might of the country by the following measures:

"a) Secure a corresponding expansion of the armaments industry and run all the rest of the state industry of the Union in such a way as will in peacetime take into account the needs of wartime; b) improve armaments and saturate the Red Army with them; c) correspondingly improve and build a network of ways of communication—railways, freight and motor traction; d) develop all forms of communication; e) develop horse-breeding, with the object of supplying the needs not only of agriculture, but also of the Red Army, and of its cavalry in particular; f) pay profound attention to the military training of the entire population. . . ." (*The Congresses of Soviets of the U.S.S.R.—Decisions and Resolutions*, Moscow, 1939, Russ. ed., p. 83.)

The decisions which the Third Congress of Soviets adopted on Comrade Frunze's report were an important factor in strengthening the defensive capacity of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Comrade Frunze, however, was not destined to carry out this program of military development; he died on October 31, 1925. His death was a severe loss to the Party and to the Soviet people. He was succeeded at the post of People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs by that hero of the Civil War and comrade-in-arms of Stalin and Frunze—K. E. Voroshilov.

In December 1925, the Fourteenth Congress of the Party was opened.

In his report to the congress, Comrade Stalin set the Party the immediate task of transforming our country from an agrarian into an industrial state. The congress approved of the leader's proposal and it resolved: "To ensure for the U.S.S.R. economic independence, which will safeguard the U.S.S.R. against becoming an appendage of capitalist world economy, and for this purpose to steer a course towards the industrialization of the country, the development of the production of means of production. . . ."

The Fourteenth Party Congress has gone into the history of the Party and of our country as the Industrialization Congress. In view of the formation of the U.S.S.R. the congress decided to rename the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).

In deciding firmly to steer a course towards industrialization, the congress denounced the bourgeois views of the so-called "new opposition" which sought to drag the Party and the working class back—to the path of restoring capitalism. The Zinovievites had secured election as delegates to the congress by downright fraud (at the Party Conference in Leningrad that was held before the congress, they hypocritically voted for the Party line). The congress decided to send to Leningrad a group of its delegates, consisting of Comrades Molotov, Kirov, Voroshilov, Kalinin, Andreyev and others, to explain to the members of the Leningrad Party organization the duplicity which had been practised by their delegates at the Party Congress.

An Extraordinary Conference of the Leningrad Party organization unanimously condemned the hypocritical Zinovievites and elected a new Regional Committee of the Party, headed by S. M. Kirov, under whose leadership the Leningrad Bolsheviks launched a struggle for socialist industrialization.

## 58. THE DIFFICULTIES AND SUCCESSES OF SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

**The U.S.S.R. Becomes an Industrial Country.** During the period of restoration the task had been to put agriculture on its feet and to restore the existing mills and factories. But these were old enterprises equipped with obsolete machinery. The task now was to re-equip these old plants with up-to-date machinery.

During the period of restoration it was mainly light industry that was developed. The task now was to expand and strengthen heavy industry, without which neither light industry nor agriculture could grow. It was necessary to build a number of new plants and to create new branches of industry that had not existed at all in tsarist Russia, *i.e.*, to build plants for the manufacture of machines, machine tools, automobiles, chemicals, aircraft and tractors, a new defence



industry, etc. The current task was to bring about the socialist industrialization of the country.

The erection of industrial plants involves huge expenditure. Capitalist countries, as a rule, build up their industries out of funds obtained from outside, by plundering colonies, by wars of conquest, by foreign credits and loans, and also by exploiting their own workers and peasants. The Land of Socialism could not on principle resort to such sources for its industrialization. There was only one way open for the proletarian state, the way of the socialist accumulation of internal revenues and savings, of industrialization out of the internal resources of the country. The most important source of accumulation was the revenue of nationalized industries, state trade, and also the current funds of credit institutions and savings banks. Wide masses of the working people took up the slogan of the "fight to effect economies." Stern measures were undertaken to eliminate the unproductive expenditure of state and public funds. At the same time the Soviet government permitted no reduction in expenditure on the protection of labour, and prohibited economies to be effected at the expense of the workers.

In capitalist countries industrialization usually starts with the development of light industry. Only after light industry has accumulated the necessary funds does the development of heavy industry begin. This process takes a long time; that was why the Communist Party did not take this path. "The Communist Party of our country therefore rejected the 'ordinary' path of industrialization and commenced the industrialization of the country by developing heavy industry" (J. Stalin, "Speech Delivered at an Election Meeting in the Stalin Election District, Moscow, February 9, 1946," Moscow, 1946, p. 16).

The very first year of the Party's course towards industrialization produced positive results. In 1926, the year's state grain purchases plan was carried out and the market price of grain dropped. The rate of the chervonets became stabilized. Trade turnover increased. Large-scale industry also fulfilled its plan and showed a 40 per cent increase in output, the heavy industry showing an increase of nearly 50 per cent. The metal industry developed with exceptional rapidity; in 1924 its output had been less than half of the pre-war output, but in 1926 it already exceeded that of 1913.

Investments for the re-equipment of old plants and the building of new ones amounted to 811,000,000 rubles, compared with 385,000,000 in the preceding year.

Old plants which had been idle were restarted, and new plants which had been built by the Soviet government were put into operation. In the spring of 1925, the first blast furnace of the Dniepropetrovsk Steel Plant, the largest in the South, which had been idle since 1917, was started. A month later the Karabash Copper Smelting

Plant in the Urals was started. In the beginning of December 1925, the Shatura district power plant near Moscow, the largest peat-fuel power plant in the world, was opened. During the May Day festival in 1926, two large hydroelectric power stations were opened, one in Tashkent and one in Erevan.

In July 1926, traffic was started on the first electric railway in the U.S.S.R., that connecting Baku with the oil fields and the township of Sabunchi; and the foundation stone was officially laid of the Stalingrad Tractor Plant.

The enormous increase, under the leadership of the Party, in the activities and constructive initiative of the masses resulted in rapid economic successes. In September 1926, the output of Soviet industry for the first time exceeded the pre-war level. Beginning with the new economic year of 1926-1927, the industries of the U.S.S.R. produced more than in tsarist Russia at the peak of her economic development, *viz.*, in 1913. Agricultural output and the national income of the Land of Soviets reached the pre-war level.

When the first decade of the existence of the Soviet State was reached the results of socialist industrialization were already palpable. Over a billion rubles had been invested in capital construction and a number of new large plants had been put into operation. The building of new giants of socialist industry was commenced. In December 1926, the Volkhov Electric Power Plant, the first-born of Soviet electrification, was officially opened. The building of this plant was begun on Lenin's proposal as far back as 1918. In 1927, the Transcaucasian district hydroelectric plant, which provided power for Tbilisi, the capital of Soviet Georgia, was opened, the Red Putilov Plant turned out its first twenty-one tractors, and the AMO Automobile Plant (now the Stalin Plant) in Moscow turned out its first ten motor trucks. In the same year the construction was begun of the Turksib Railway which, running through the waterless desert of Kazakhstan, was to unite Siberia with Central Asia. Thus, all over the country intense work was in progress in building new factories, mills, mines, power stations and railways.

The proportion of industry to the entire national economy rose to 42 per cent and reached the pre-war level. Still more rapid was the growth of large-scale socialist industry, the output of which was 18 per cent higher than the preceding year. This was a record increase, such as the large-scale industry of the most advanced capitalist countries never reached even in the period of their highest development.

The jubilee session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. held on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the victory of the October Revolution took a decision to introduce a 7-hour day in industry.

**The Successes of Industrialization in the National Republics.** Very considerable success was achieved by various non-Russian national republics. In the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, large-scale industry was quickly restored and agriculture was put firmly on its feet. Progress was also made in national culture. Two million school-children received instruction in the Ukrainian language, and more Ukrainian books were published in two years than had been published in the entire century before the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Similar economic and cultural progress was achieved in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Before the October Revolution there was not a single technical school or higher educational establishment in Byelorussia, but in 1927, there were already four higher educational establishments and thirty technical schools. Schoolchildren received instruction in their native language. The Jewish language became officially recognized in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Over 100,000 Jewish working people found employment in industry and in agriculture. These achievements were the result of the policy of industrializing the formerly backward non-Russian regions.

Great success in the building of Socialism was also achieved in the Transcaucasian republics. Uniting their efforts in the task of reorganizing their national economy, the numerous nationalities of Transcaucasia established such a reign of peace among themselves as they had never known before.

In the period of 1925-1927 there was carried out in the young republics of Central Asia an agrarian and water-resources reform which abolished the survivals of feudal relationships in the utilization of the land and water resources, and stimulated the development of the dekhán (peasant) farms which became the principal suppliers of Soviet cotton for the textile mills in the U.S.S.R. Over 100,000 dekhán families (possessing little or no land) received a total of over 300,000 hectares of land which had been taken from the landlords and baí (kulaks).

**The Provocative Conduct of the Imperialists and Their Trotskyite Agents.** Socialist industrialization encountered the opposition of the capitalist elements in the country, who were supported by foreign governments. In the endeavour to frustrate, or at least to hinder, the socialist industrialization of the U.S.S.R., the imperialists tried to drag her into another war.

In February 1927, Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, sent the government of the U.S.S.R. a note demanding the cessation of anti-British propaganda and threatening to abrogate the trade agreement and break off diplomatic relations. At this time also the Chinese militarists made a bandit raid on the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Peking. In May the police raided the premises of the Soviet trade agencies in London. In retaliation to this gross violation of the



J. V. Stalin, S. M. Kirov and N. M. Shvernik in Leningrad in 1926

trade agreement, the Soviet government stopped sending new orders for goods to England. Chamberlain broke off diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. in the expectation that this would be followed by a rupture of relations between other capitalist countries and the U.S.S.R., and the isolation of the latter.

In answer to this act of war provocation and attempt to institute an economic blockade against the U.S.S.R., the workers appealed to the Soviet government to issue a loan. The first Industrialization Loan in the sum of 200,000,000 rubles, was subscribed in a very short space of time.

The Aviation and Chemical Society founded in January 1927 issued an appeal for funds to build an aircraft squadron of the Red Air Fleet to be named "Our Answer to Chamberlain." This appeal met with a warm response among wide masses of the people.

The imperialists, however, continued their acts of provocation. On June 7, 1927, a Whiteguard killed the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw, Voikov, and the Polish rulers took this assassin under their protection.

Within the U.S.S.R. the agents of imperialism plotted to assassinate leading members of Party and Soviet bodies. Several industrial plants and army stores were set on fire.

The intensification of the class struggle in the country and the deterioration in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist countries encouraged the Trotskyites to launch a new attack upon the general line of the Party. In 1926, the remnants of all the defeated factional groups formed what was called an "anti-Party bloc" headed by Trotsky, and that year became a secret agency of the British Intelligence Service.

In the endeavour to disrupt the alliance between the working class and the basic mass of the peasantry, the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship demanded that higher taxes be imposed upon the middle peasants. The Trotskyite provocateurs tried to induce the masses to believe that it was not worth while defending the U.S.S.R. because, so they said, the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. was impossible anyhow.

The Trotskyites organized an underground party which stood for the restoration of capitalism. They had their leading central bodies and secret printing plants, formed secret anti-Soviet groups, and enlisted in their ranks the remnants of the enemies of the people who had been expelled from the Party. On the Tenth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution the Trotskyites and Zinovievites tried to organize anti-Soviet demonstrations in the streets of Moscow and Leningrad. In November 1927, the Bolshevik Party expelled the traitors Trotsky and Zinoviev from its ranks.

Characterizing the international position of the U.S.S.R. at the end of 1927, Comrade Stalin said: "*The growth of interventionist tendencies in the camp of the imperialists and the danger of war (against the U.S.S.R.) is one of the main facts of the present situation*" (*Political Report of the Central Committee to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.[B.]*, Moscow, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 13).

The government and the Party called upon all the working people to display increased vigilance and to wage a relentless struggle against the enemies of the proletarian dictatorship. In 1927, a "Defence Week" was held throughout the country, the watchword being "In the struggle for peace strengthen the defences of the Land of Soviets." The work-

ing class demonstrated its readiness to defend its socialist homeland. In the capitalist countries of Europe mass demonstrations and meetings of working people were also held to protest against the threatening intervention.

While exposing the hostile designs of the imperialists, the Soviet government firmly pursued a peace policy and strove to improve relations with a number of capitalist countries. In the autumn of 1927, a trade agreement was concluded with Latvia, a treaty of neutrality and a trade agreement were concluded with Iran, and a convention permitting Japanese to fish in Soviet waters, and several concessions agreements were concluded with Japan. The economic ties between the U.S.S.R. and capitalist countries were strengthened in 1927.

Amid continuous acts of provocation and threats of war, the Soviet government remained calm and determined to fight for the cause of peace to the end.

## 59. THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

### Steering a Course Towards the Collectivization of Agriculture.

The Tenth Anniversary of the existence of the proletarian dictatorship was marked by the achievement of considerable success in the socialist industrialization of the country; but agriculture, and grain farming in particular, still lagged very much behind. Individual peasant farming could not achieve high productivity as it was unable to employ machines, fertilizers and the achievements of science and technique.

The raising of the entire national economy of the U.S.S.R. was hindered by the scattered character and backwardness of agriculture. The amount of grain available for the market was lower than before the war, the landlords, the former big suppliers of grain, having been liquidated. The breakup of peasant farms into small farms which began in 1918, continued through all the years of the revolution. The small peasant farms became hardly more than self-supplying. Although the output of grain in 1927 was almost on the level of 1913, the amount of grain that reached the market was only a third of the pre-war quantity of marketable grain. The kulaks, whom the Soviet government was restricting and dislodging, sold only 2,080,000 tons of grain as against 10,400,000 tons which they sold before the revolution. In 1927, the collective farms and state farms placed only about 560,000 tons of grain on the market. The grain problem facing the national economy was one of the utmost acuteness. To solve this problem it was necessary to eliminate the backwardness of agriculture, to supply it with machines and organize it on the basis of large-scale production; but this could be done only on the basis of the collective cultivation of the soil.

This was the solution proposed by Comrade Stalin in the report he delivered at the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) which was held in December 1927. He said: "The way out is to turn the small and scattered peasant farms into large united farms based on the common cultivation of the soil, to introduce collective cultivation of the soil on the basis of a new and higher technique. . . . There is no other way out" (*Political Report of the Central Committee to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.[B.]*, Moscow, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 26).

The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) has gone into history as the Collectivization of Agriculture Congress. It adopted a plan for extending and strengthening the network of collective farms, and issued directives to develop further the offensive against the kulaks. The congress also passed a resolution calling for the drafting of the First Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy.

Commenting on the importance of this transition to a Five-Year Plan, Comrade Stalin said: "Our plans are not forecast plans, not guesswork plans, but *directive* plans, which are *binding* upon our leading bodies, and which *define* the trend of our *future* economic development on a *country-wide* scale" (*Political Report of the Central Committee to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.[B.]*, Moscow, 1936, Russ. ed., p. 40).

**The Offensive Against the Kulaks.** A start was made on the First Five-Year Plan in the autumn of 1928 in the midst of an intense class struggle. Taking advantage of the grain difficulties, the kulaks did everything to sabotage the state purchase of grain. In conformity with the directives of the Fifteenth Congress, the Party launched a determined offensive against the kulaks. In retaliation to their refusal to sell their surplus stocks of grain to the state at fixed prices, emergency laws were passed by which the surplus stocks of the kulaks were confiscated by order of a court. The poorer peasants were granted additional rebates and the right to receive 25 per cent of the grain that was confiscated from the kulaks. These measures isolated the kulaks and their resistance was broken.

The bourgeois specialists also greatly intensified their opposition to the Soviet State. In 1928, a sabotage organization of bourgeois specialists was discovered in the Shakhty coal field region. These saboteurs operated on the instructions of the former mine owners, White-guard émigrés and foreign capitalists, and set out to ruin the coal industry of the U.S.S.R. They wrecked mines and factories, organized fires and explosions, wrecked machinery, caused roof falls in mines, and did everything to worsen the conditions of the miners in order to rouse their discontent. The wreckers were tried and received the punishment they deserved.

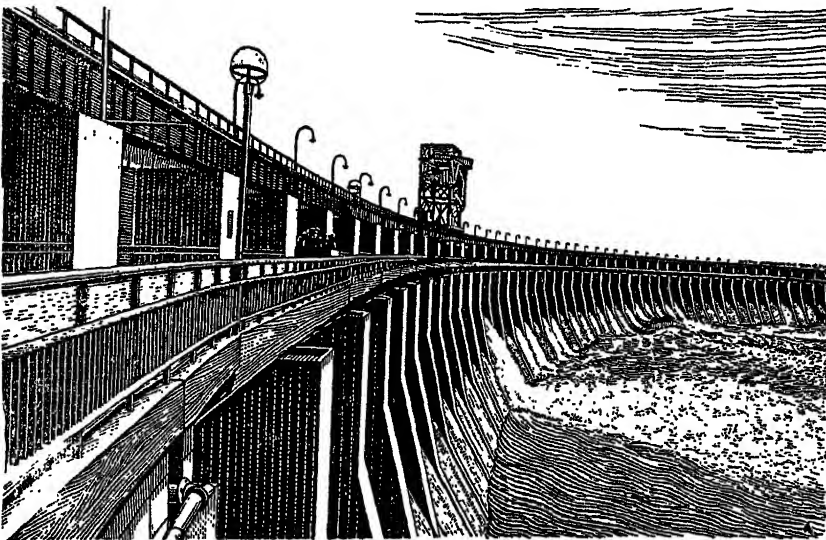
The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party called upon all

Party organizations and all the workers to learn the lesson of the Shakhty case and to develop self-criticism on a wide scale in order to reveal the deficiencies in the work of economic and Soviet bodies and organizations. At the same time Comrade Stalin pointed out that Bolshevik business executives must themselves become experts in matters of production so that wreckers from among the old bourgeois specialists should not be able to deceive them. The Party and the Soviet government took measures to improve the training of young specialists, and thousands of capable and devoted men and women from the ranks of the working class were sent to study.

The Party's offensive against the kulaks evoked the open defence of them by the Bukharin-Rykov group. The Bukharinites demanded the repeal of the emergency laws against the kulaks and most strongly opposed the course taken by the Party aimed at the collectivization of the countryside.

They also opposed industrialization, and the creation of heavy industry in particular, and demanded that the funds assigned for heavy industry should be transferred to light industry.

The Party sternly rebuffed the Rights and denounced them as agents of the kulaks in the Party. Comrade Stalin said: "... The triumph of the Right deviation in our Party would unleash the forces of capitalism, undermine the revolutionary positions of the pro-



The dam of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Plant





G. K. Orjonikidze

letariat and increase the chances of restoring capitalism in our country" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 233).

**A Year of Great Change.** In April 1929, the Sixteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) endorsed the First Five-Year Plan which had been drawn up under the direction of Comrade Stalin.

This Five-Year Plan provided for capital investments in the national economy, in the period of 1928-1933, amounting to 64,600,000,000 rubles. Of this sum, 19,500,000,000 rubles were to be invested in industry, including electrification, 10,000,000,000 rubles in the transport system and 23,200,000,000 rubles in agri-

culture. This was a plan to equip the entire national economy of the U.S.S.R. with up-to-date technique.

The enormous tasks set by the Five-Year Plan roused the workers to new heights of labour enthusiasm and evoked a widespread wave of socialist emulation. Workers proclaimed themselves shock brigades of socialist labour and organized shock brigades in the factories. The workers and collective farmers not only fulfilled but more than fulfilled the plans proposed by the government; they also advanced counter-plans in excess of the government's proposals. A change took place in the attitude of people towards work, which from a compulsory duty began to turn, as Comrade Stalin has said, into "a matter of honour, a matter of glory, a matter of valour and heroism."

Gigantic industrial construction was carried on all over the country. The building of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Station (Dnieproges), which was begun in 1927, was vigorously proceeded with. Where the rocky rapids had for ages prevented the passage of ships, a huge dam was built 760 metres long and 60 metres high. The water level was raised, the dangerous rapids were submerged and the Dnieper was converted into a navigable river along its whole length. The power of the waterfall was utilized to set up a huge hydroelectric plant. Intensive operations were conducted in building a giant steel plant on Mt. Magnitnaya, in the South Urals. For ages this mountain

had concealed just below the surface of the ground enormous deposits of high-grade ore which could now be utilized by the vast new Soviet plant. In the Donetz Basin work was commenced on the erection of the Kramatorsk and Gorlovka Steel Plants, and on the reconstruction of the Lugansk Locomotive Works. New collieries were opened and new blast furnaces were erected. The Urals Machine-Building Works and the Berezniki and Solikamsk Chemical Works were under construction; work was developed on the erection of large automobile plants in Moscow and Gorky and of gigantic tractor plants and harvester-combine plants in the Volga Region and in the Ukraine. In the course of eleven months a huge tractor plant rose up in the steppe near Stalingrad. In building the Dnieper Power Station and the Stalingrad Tractor Works the workers beat world records in productivity of labour. The enormous scope of the new industrial construction, and the heroism displayed by the millions of the working class, were without parallel in human history.

The work of building up heavy industry was directed by the veteran Bolshevik and pupil of Lenin and Stalin, G. K. Orjonikidze (1886-1937). During the Civil War, Sergo Orjonikidze was one of the creators and organizers of the Red Army, and during the years of the upbuilding of Socialism he became one of the greatest organizers of victory on the front of socialist construction. His uncompromising hostility towards all the enemies of Socialism, his strict adherence to principle and pursuit of lofty ideals, his straightforwardness and sterling honesty and his cordial, plain and solicitous attitude towards people, won for him the profound love and respect of all working people. The First Five-Year Plan and its execution cannot be separated from the enormous work performed by Sergo Orjonikidze, whom the workers and business executives called the "commander-in-chief of heavy industry."

The wave of labour enthusiasm among the masses of the workers was followed by a wave of enthusiasm in the building of collective farms. An important part in swinging the masses of the peasants over to collective farming was played by the state farms and the machine and tractor stations.

In the spring of 1929, the Council of Labour and Defence adopted a decision to set up machine and tractor stations on a mass scale and vigorous measures were taken to carry out this decision. Peasants came to the state farms and machine and tractor stations, and after seeing the tractors at work asked for assistance in uniting in collective farms so as to be able to cultivate the soil with the aid of up-to-date machinery. This started the mass collective-farm movement.

Whereas in 1928, the area cultivated by collective farms amounted to 1,390,000 hectares, in 1929, it amounted to 4,262,000 hectares. That year the state farms and collective farms produced over 6,400,000

tons of grain of which 2,080,000 tons were available for the market. In 1929, the peasants joined the collective farms not individually, as had been the case hitherto, but in whole villages and districts. The middle peasants had joined the collective farms. In North Caucasus, in the Ukraine and in the Middle and Lower Volga Regions, entire districts became collectivized. This was the beginning of solid collectivization.

The year 1929 has gone into the history of our country as "the year of great change." It was signalized by sweeping victories for Socialism in industry and in agriculture, the swing of the middle peasants towards collective farming, and the beginning of the establishment of collective farms on a mass scale.

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# U.S.S.R.—LAND OF SOCIALISM

## *Chapter XV*

### THE U.S.S.R. IN THE PERIOD OF THE STRUGGLE TO COLLECTIVIZE AGRICULTURE (1930-1934)

#### 60. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOCIALIST REORGANIZATION OF PEASANT FARMING

**Further Provocation of War.** The successes achieved in socialist industrialization facilitated the Soviet government's struggle for peace and against new acts of war provocation. The fact that the capitalist countries which encircled the Soviet Union continued actively to prepare for war against the Land of Socialism made it urgently necessary still further to develop large-scale industry and to strengthen the military might and defensive capacity of the U.S.S.R.

In 1929 an acute world economic crisis broke out, as a result of which 24,000,000 workers were thrown out of work. The industrial crisis was interwoven with an agrarian crisis, which gravely affected tens of millions of peasants. The bourgeoisie sought a way out of the crisis by suppressing the working class, on the one hand, and by driving towards another imperialist war for the redivision of the world, on the other.

Again the bourgeois press all over the world raised a howl that "Bolshevism is the enemy of civilization." The columns of the venal newspapers were filled with scurrilous legends about "Soviet dumping," and "forced labour in the U.S.S.R." The Pope proclaimed another "crusade" against the Soviet Union. The imperialists again tried to organize an economic boycott of the proletarian state. The governments of the United States, France, and Rumania passed laws imposing a ban on imports from the Soviet Union. A new series of provocative anti-Soviet acts was perpetrated, one of the gravest of which was the conflict on the Chinese Eastern Railway, organized by the counter-revolutionary groups in Manchuria in obedience to the orders of the imperialist countries. On July 10, 1929, Whiteguard Chinese forces seized the Chinese Eastern Railway, and shelled and machine-gunned Soviet frontier villages. The Soviet government called

upon the central government of China and the Manchurian authorities to settle the conflict in a peaceful way and demanded that the former situation on the Chinese Eastern Railway be restored. The Chinese government rejected the Soviet Union's legitimate demands, whereupon the Soviet government broke off diplomatic and commercial relations with China and took a series of measures to protect the Soviet frontiers in the Far East. In August 1929, the Special Far Eastern Army was formed by order of K. E. Voroshilov, the People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs. In October and November 1929, the Special Far Eastern Army struck a number of crushing blows at the Whiteguard Chinese forces. Only then was an agreement signed by which the Chinese Eastern Railway was returned to the Soviet Union.

This turn of affairs sobered the advocates of intervention. The British government resumed diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. The attempt to introduce an economic boycott of the U.S.S.R. also failed. In the beginning of 1930, the Soviet government signed new trade agreements with Great Britain, Italy and Turkey.

Thus, the Soviet Union repelled this new attack of international imperialism and ensured for herself the opportunity of peacefully continuing the work of building Socialism.

**The Elimination of the Kulaks as a Class.** The successes achieved in socialist industrialization brought nearer the decisive clash with the last capitalist class in the U.S.S.R.—the kulaks. The growth of socialist industry and of the agricultural co-operative movement, which gradually accustomed the peasants to collective farming, and the resolute struggle that was waged against the kulaks in 1923 and 1929, prepared the ground for the transition to solid collectivization.

The socialist reorganization of agriculture in the U.S.S.R. was the most difficult and complicated task the revolution had to face. In 1929, there were in the U.S.S.R. 25,000,000 individual peasant farms, of which 35 per cent were poor peasant farms, 60 per cent were middle peasant farms and 4 to 5 per cent kulak farms. Although the number of poor peasants had been reduced to half the number that had existed in pre-war times, capitalism had not been uprooted in the rural districts, for small individual farming still predominated.

Up to 1929 the Soviet State had pursued a policy of restricting and dislodging the kulaks. It imposed higher taxes upon them, compelled them to sell their grain to the state at fixed prices, kept the size of kulak farms within definite limits by the law which restricted the renting of land, reduced the scale of kulak farming by means of the law which restricted the hiring of labour on individual peasant farms, etc.

At the end of 1929, in view of the growth of collective farms and state farms, the Soviet State abandoned the policy of restricting and dislodging the kulaks for the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class.

The watchword concerning the elimination of the kulaks as a class on the basis of solid collectivization, was issued by Comrade Stalin on December 27, 1929, and incorporated in a special resolution of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) dated January 5, 1930, entitled: "The Rate of Collectivization and State Measures to Assist the Development of Collective Farms." Taking into account the different degrees of ripeness for collectivization in the various regions, this resolution provided for three groups of regions to carry through collectivization at different speeds. The first group included the most important grain regions—North Caucasus and the Middle and Lower Volga Regions—where the largest number of tractors were available, where there were the largest number of state farms, and where most experience had been gained in fighting the kulaks. This group was to complete the process of collectivization in the spring of 1931. The second group, which included the grain regions of the Ukraine, the Central Black-Earth Region, Siberia, the Urals and Kazakhstan, was to complete the process of collectivization in the spring of 1932. For the other regions—the Moscow Region, Transcaucasia, Central Asia and others, the completion of the process of collectivization was put off until 1933, i.e., to the end of the Five-Year Plan period. On the basis of this resolution the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., in February 1930, adopted a decision to prohibit the employment of hired labour in individual peasant farms and to grant the local Soviets in the districts where solid collectivization had been accomplished the right to take all measures necessary to combat the kulaks, including that of confiscating kulak lands and of deporting the kulaks from the given districts.

In a decision it adopted on January 5, 1930, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) laid it down that the main type of collective farm to be established was to be the agricultural artel, in which the principal means of production are collectivized.

At the same time the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) deemed it necessary to accelerate the erection of plants for the manufacture of tractors, harvester combines and other agricultural machinery required for large-scale farming. To cover expenditure on surveying of the land and on other farm measures, the government, in 1929-1930, advanced the collective farms credits to the amount of 500,000,000 rubles. The kulaks were expropriated in the same way as the capitalists in industry had been expropriated in 1918, but the means of production owned by the kulaks passed not to the state, but to the collective farms. This was a most profound revolution.

"The distinguishing feature of this revolution is that it was accomplished *from above*, on the initiative of the state, and directly supported *from below* by the millions of peasants, who were fighting to throw off kulak bondage and to live in freedom in the collective farms.

"This revolution, at one blow, solved three fundamental problems of socialist construction:

"a) It eliminated the most numerous class of exploiters in our country, the kulak class, the mainstay of capitalist restoration;

"b) It transferred the most numerous labouring class in our country, the peasant class, from the path of individual farming, which breeds capitalism, to the path of co-operative, collective, Socialist farming;

"c) It furnished the Soviet regime with a Socialist base in agriculture—the most extensive and vitally necessary, yet least developed, branch of national economy.

"This destroyed the last mainsprings of the restoration of capitalism within the country and at the same time created new and decisive conditions for the building up of a Socialist economic system" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*, Moscow, 1945, p. 305).

The kulaks waged a fierce struggle against the collectivization of agriculture. They killed active proponents of the collective farms, set fire to collective-farm property, and urged the peasants to slaughter their cattle before joining the collective farms; but all their attempts to turn back the wheel of history utterly failed. The elimination of the kulaks as a class on the basis of solid collectivization was effected with the outright support of the poor and middle peasants. But this does not at all imply that the process was accomplished without all sorts of difficulties.

The Party and the government had to overcome enormous difficulties. For example, some Soviet administrators and Party workers, instead of patiently explaining the Party's policy to those individual farmers who still hesitated to join the collective farms, resolved to complete the process of collectivization at the earliest date without any regard for local conditions. They violated the Bolshevik principle that collective farms were to be formed on a voluntary basis, and in some cases they applied the kulak-elimination measures against middle peasants and even against poor peasants. It transpired later that these "distortions of policy" had been deliberately practised by the Bukharinites and Trotskyites in order to turn the peasants against collectivization and to prevent its successful advance. These gross and pernicious distortions threatened to discredit the collective-farm movement in the eyes of the peasants and to disrupt the alliance between the working class and the peasantry.

On March 2, 1930, Comrade Stalin published in *Pravda* an article entitled "Dizzy with Success," in which he urged the necessity of taking measures to put a stop to distortions of policy in the collective-farm movement. In another article entitled: "Reply to Collective-Farm Comrades," Comrade Stalin explained the essence of the Party

line in collective-farm development and the importance of the collective farms for the working peasantry. He emphasized that the establishment of collective farms must be on a purely voluntary basis, and reminded his readers that the main link in the collective-farm movement was the agricultural artel. After this, the peasants who had left the collective farms as a result of the pigheaded distortions of the Party line began to join them again.

**The Successes of the Socialist Offensive.** On June 26, 1930, the Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) was opened. This congress has gone into history as the congress of the sweeping offensive of Socialism along the whole front. In the preceding stages of the struggle for Socialism the Party had conducted the socialist offensive on separate sectors (trade, industry, collective-farm development). Now a general socialist offensive was launched for the purpose of tearing up the very deepest-grown roots of capitalism. As the resolution of the Sixteenth Party Congress stated: "The task set by Lenin of converting 'NEP Russia' into 'Socialist Russia' is being carried out."

The Sixteenth Party Congress summed up the first results of the socialist offensive. Industry had reached a level nearly twice as high as the pre-war level. For the first time in the history of our country industrial output constituted more than half and agricultural output less than half of the total output of the country. The collectivization plan was overfulfilled. On May 1, 1930, collectivization in the principal grain regions already embraced 40 to 50 per cent of the peasant farms and the total sown area of the collective farms amounted to 36,000,000 hectares. During the three years the amount of produce available for the market from collective farms increased more than 40-fold.

The collective-farm peasantry had been converted into a genuine and firm bulwark of the Soviet State. The U.S.S.R. had entered the period of Socialism; Socialism had triumphed not only in industry but also in agriculture.

The successes of the socialist offensive were achieved in a struggle against the furious resistance of the moribund classes. In their struggle against the collective farms the kulaks resorted to new tactics in the effort to disrupt the collective farms from within. They wormed their way into the collective farms, some even got themselves elected to the management boards, or obtained jobs as business managers, team leaders, bookkeepers, stablemen, etc. Employing the tactics of "quiet sapping" they tried to undermine labour discipline in the collective farms, spoiled tractors and agricultural machinery, infected the horses with glanders, mange and other diseases, pilfered the collective-farm crops and so forth. By these means they wanted to frighten the peasants and undermine their confidence in the collective farms.

But the best of the collective farmers staunchly defended the cause



of collective farming. Self-sacrificing fighters for the collective farms were also to be found among schoolchildren and Young Pioneers. Thus in the Urals, in 1932, a twelve-year-old Young Pioneer, Pavlik Morozov, exposed his own father, the chairman of the village Soviet, as an accomplice of the kulaks. The kulaks then ambushed Pavlik in the forest and killed him.

The Soviet authorities took resolute measures against the sabotage and wrecking work of the kulaks; the latter were cleaned out of the collective farms which they had managed to join, were deported for wrecking work, and so forth. On August 7, 1932, a law was passed for the protection of socialist property. A plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.) that was held in January 1933, resolved to set up Political Departments at Machine and Tractor Stations and in state farms. During the two years that these Departments existed they did an enormous amount of work in training leading collective-farm personnel, consolidating the collective farms and purging them of kulak elements and wreckers.

The underground counter-revolutionary organizations which found no support among the masses and acted as agents for the foreign imperialists tried to take advantage of the intensification of the class struggle in the rural districts. In 1930, the State Political Administration discovered a counter-revolutionary organization which called itself the Industrial Party and consisted of a group of engineer-saboteurs who were fulfilling the instructions of foreign capitalists. The members of the Industrial Party tried to cause disruption and chaos in industry and to prepare the ground for intervention, which their foreign masters had timed for 1930. Operating in contact with the Industrial Party was the kulak so-called Toiling Peasants' Party which, led by Socialist Revolutionaries working underground, conducted wrecking and counter-revolutionary activities in the field of agriculture. A Menshevik sabotage organization, working in alliance with the above-mentioned counter-revolutionary organizations, was operating in the higher economic and planning bodies. In September 1930, a gang of miscreants was discovered who made food supplies the sphere of their wrecking work; they vented their hatred upon the Soviet people by deliberately spoiling and poisoning meat, fish, vegetables, etc., in order to spread starvation and thus rouse discontent among the working people. In 1930-1932 several counter-revolutionary groups of Bukharinites and Trotskyites were discovered. It transpired later that all these groups were branches of a joint Trotskyite-Bukharinite espionage, wrecker, sabotage and terrorist organization which was working deep underground. The leaders and members of this organization were exposed and convicted by the proletarian court in 1936-1938.

A great part in defeating the enemies of Socialism was played by V. M. Molotov, who, in 1930, was the head of the Soviet govern-

ment. After the victory of the October Revolution, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov—faithful disciple of Lenin, and Stalin's close collaborator—became one of the foremost organizers and builders of the Soviet State. He was unswerving and uncompromising in carrying out the Leninist political line, strengthening the Soviet State and ensuring the successful building of Socialism.

**The Five-Year Plan in Four Years.** The next task that faced the Party and the Soviet State after heavy industry, and the machine-building industry in particular, had been built up, was to reorganize all branches of the national economy on the basis of new, up-to-date equipment. Technique acquired decisive importance, but many business executives underrated its role in the period of reconstruction and did not concern themselves with problems of the technique of production as they regarded this as the business of the experts.

In a speech he delivered at the First All-Union Conference of Managers of Socialist Industry in February 1931, Comrade Stalin condemned this pernicious underrating of technique. "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries," he said. "We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or they will crush us" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 356). He went on to say that the Bolsheviks must master technique, that in the period of reconstruction technique decides everything. In answer to the objection that it was difficult to master technique, Comrade Stalin said: "There are no fortresses which Bolsheviks cannot capture."

Following Comrade Stalin's advice, the Party and the working class began to promote and train new, Soviet experts. Gradually a new, Soviet industrial-technical intelligentsia came into being, drawn from the ranks of the working class and the peasantry, an intelligentsia that was vitally interested in achieving success in socialist construction.

The First Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy was to have been carried out in the period from 1928 to 1933, but the workers advanced the watchword: "The Five-Year Plan in Four Years." The workers in the factories and the peasants in the collective farms examined the possibilities of speeding up the fulfilment of their plans, of cutting down expenditure and of increasing productivity of labour. Factory challenged factory, work team challenged work team, and workers challenged one another individually, to engage in socialist emulation. Teams and individuals undertook to work like shock workers. The first "shock brigades" came from the ranks of the Young Communist League. The workers and collective farmers began to work in a new way and steadily increased the productivity of labour.

An enormous role in placing the whole of economic activity on a new footing was played by the six conditions for success in industry

which Comrade Stalin enumerated at a conference of business executives held in June 1931.

The first condition advanced by Comrade Stalin for the successful development of industry was that industrial undertakings must recruit manpower in an organized way by concluding contracts with collective farms. The second condition was that an end be put to the fluctuation of manpower, for this was having a serious effect upon production. He further proposed to do away with "wage equilization" and to give the principal categories of workers an inducement to remain at their particular factories by properly organizing wages and improving their living conditions. The third condition for the successful development of industry, in Comrade Stalin's view, was properly to organize labour, to do away with "depersonalization" and make every employee strictly and personally responsible for the task with which he is entrusted. Comrade Stalin's fourth condition was that resolute steps be taken to train an industrial and technical intelligentsia from the ranks of the working class, while rank-and-file workers with initiative and organizing ability must more boldly be promoted to leading posts. His fifth condition was a change in attitude towards the engineers and technicians of the old school; he urged greater attention to their needs, more solicitude for their welfare and a bolder attitude in enlisting their co-operation. His sixth and last condition for the development of industry was the introduction and enforcement of strict accounting and the development of capital accumulation within industry itself, by mobilizing internal resources and eliminating mismanagement.

In concluding his historic speech at the conference of business executives Comrade Stalin said: "What makes our production plan real is the millions of working people who are creating a new life. What makes our plan real is the living people, it is you and I, our will to work, our readiness to work in the new way, our determination to carry out the plan" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 377).

**The Results of the First Five-Year Plan.** The execution of the Five-Year Plan in four years called for a very rapid rate of development of industry. In 1931, the third year of the Five-Year Plan, which was called the "third decisive year," over a thousand new plants were planned to be built. The capital invested in industry and agriculture in that year amounted to 17,000,000,000 rubles, compared with 10,000,000,000 in 1930. Traffic was started on the Turkestan-Siberian Railway, 1,500 kilometres long, which ran through the steppes of Kazakhstan where only recently goods were carried solely by horses and camels. In February 1931, the first Soviet tractor was put out at the Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant, and in August the Kharkov Tractor Plant turned out its first tractors. The first Soviet

blooming mill was built at the Izhevsk Plant, and the Red Putilov Works completed its five-year tractor program in three years. The AMO (now the Stalin) Automobile Plant, built on the site of the old automobile assembly workshops, started production, and the erection of the Gorky Automobile Plant was also completed. In that year the harvester-combine plant in Saratov also started production.

A new iron and steel centre had sprung up in the eastern part of the Land of Soviets. The first mine was already in operation at Mt. Magnitnaya, preparations were being made to start new blast furnaces, and the socialist city of Magnitogorsk was rapidly taking shape and growing. The first section of the huge Kuznetsk Iron and Steel Plant began to operate.

New large-scale building projects were put into operation, such as the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal in Karelia, and in Moscow plans were being drawn up for the construction of an underground railway.

The "third decisive year" also witnessed an unprecedented growth of the collective farms. In the principal grain regions, the collective farms already united four-fifths, and in the other grain regions more than half, of the peasant farms; 200,000 collective farms and 4,000 state farms sowed two-thirds of the total sown area in the country. The number of tractors in operation in 1931 rose to 125,000. The collective farms and state farms became the principal producers of grain and agricultural raw materials. This was an enormous victory for Socialism in the rural districts.

The fourth year of the Five-Year Plan was called the "fourth, culminating year." It gave an unprecedented impetus to socialist emulation. In May 1932, Nikita Izotov, a coal hewer at Gorlovka, having mastered to perfection the technique of coal production, fulfilled his plan 10-fold. Izotov shared his experience with the best miners in the Donetz Basin and soon the Izotov movement spread over the whole country.

In the "fourth, culminating year" the gigantic Dnieper Power Plant project was completed and in October of that year, 1932, the entire country celebrated the birth of this giant first-born of the Five-Year Plan.

In 1932, vigorous construction work was carried on in the remote taiga, on the banks of the river Amur. Here came many thousands of Young Communist Leaguers who, under the most difficult conditions, set to work with tremendous enthusiasm to build a shipyard and a new socialist city that was named Komsomolsk (Young Communist League City).

Thus, enthusiastic, intense and tireless building activities were proceeding all over the country. During the years of the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan 2,400 new plants were built. A number of extremely important branches of industry that were created, such as tractor

and automobile production, an up-to-date chemical industry, machine-building, and aircraft production, etc., were quite new in Russia. The output of electric power, oil, and coal increased immensely. A number of large power plants of over 100,000 kw. capacity were started. The Soviet Union was transformed from an agrarian into an industrial country.

As a result of the execution of the First Five-Year Plan, by the heroic efforts of the working class led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the foundation was laid of socialist economy. This brought about tremendous changes in the material conditions of the working people. Unemployment was totally abolished and the working people of the U.S.S.R. had now no fears for the morrow.

In the rural districts a new, collective-farm system was built. At the end of 1932, the collective farms united over 60 per cent of the peasant farms in the country and accounted for over 70 per cent of the sown area. In the principal grain regions 80 to 90 per cent of the total peasant farms were already united in collective farms.

The rural districts were supplied with tractors, harvester combines and the most up-to-date agricultural machinery. Agriculture in the U.S.S.R., equipped with the most up-to-date machinery was now conducted on a scale unequalled in any other country in the world. The collective farms destroyed the basis of class exploitation and poverty in the countryside. As Comrade Stalin expressed it, the countryside had ceased to be a stepmother to the peasants. The collective farms brought security into the lives of the former poor and middle peasants. The collective farms had become strong organizationally, economically and politically.

An important factor in strengthening the collective farms was the First All-Union Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers, held in February 1933, at which Comrade Stalin issued the slogan: "Make the collective farms Bolshevik farms and all the collective farmers prosperous." Indicating to the collective farmers how this prosperity could be achieved, Comrade Stalin said: "Of you only one thing is demanded—and that is to work conscientiously; to distribute collective-farm incomes according to the amount of work done; to take good care of collective-farm property; to take care of the tractors and the machines; to organize proper care of the horses; to fulfil the assignments of your Workers' and Peasants' State; to consolidate the collective farms and to eject from the collective farms the kulaks and their toadies who have wormed their way into them" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, pp. 445-446).

During the period of the First Five-Year Plan enormous work was accomplished in industrializing the formerly backward non-Russian national republics. In the former tsarist colonies—in Central Asia, Transcaucasia, in the steppes of Kirghizia and Kazakh-

stan, and in the remote northern regions—factories, mills, power plants, machine and tractor stations and state farms arose.

The victory of the First Five-Year Plan was a world-historic victory of the working class and peasantry of the U.S.S.R., a victory which signified their liberation from the yoke of exploitation and opened for all the working people of the U.S.S.R. the road to a life of happiness and prosperity.

The victory of Stalin's Five-Year Plan showed the superiority of the socialist economic system.

As Comrade Stalin said in his report to the Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.) that was held in January 1933:



S. M. Kirov

"The results of the Five-Year Plan have shown that it is quite possible to build a Socialist society in one country; for the economic foundations of such a society have already been laid in the U.S.S.R." (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 426).

In summing up the international significance of the Five-Year Plan, Comrade Stalin said that the plan was not the private affair of the Soviet Union but the affair of the entire international proletariat. that "*the successes of the Five-Year Plan are mobilizing the revolutionary forces of the working class of all countries against capitalism*" (*Ibid.*, p. 397).

In January 1934, the Seventeenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party was held. This congress summed up the results of the historic victory of Socialism in our country.

As early as 1918, and later, when the New Economic Policy was introduced, Lenin pointed out that there were the elements of five social-economic formations in our country. These were: 1) patriarchal economy; 2) small-commodity production; 3) private capitalism; 4) state capitalism; and 5) the socialist formation.

Now the socialist formation had undivided sway over the whole of our national economy. At this time socialist industry already constituted 99 per cent of the total industry of the country. Socialist agriculture (collective farms and state farms) already covered 85.5 per cent of the total area under grain. The capitalist elements were completely eliminated from the sphere of trade.

Comrade Stalin's report at this congress was, as S. M. Kirov expressed it, the most striking document of our epoch. In this report Comrade Stalin drew a picture of the grand work of socialist construction that had been carried out and the successes it had achieved. In it he also presented a program for the building of socialist society in the period of the Second Five-Year Plan.

The Seventeenth Congress also heard reports from Comrades Molotov and Kuibyshev on the Second Five-Year Plan for the development of the national economy, the tasks of which were even greater than those of the First Five-Year Plan; it provided for an increase in the industrial output of the U.S.S.R. that would bring it eight times above the level of pre-war output by 1937, the last year of the plan.

At the Seventeenth Congress, Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev delivered speeches of repentance, but these utterances were merely the camouflage of double-dealing enemies of the people. While verbally admitting that the Party line was correct, they were actually conspiring to assassinate Comrade Stalin, the leader of the Party, and other leading members of the Party and the government. They were selling our country to the imperialists and counted on their aid in restoring capitalism in the U.S.S.R.

The first victim of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bandits was the favourite of the Party and the working class, Sergei Mironovich Kirov, whom the Zinovievites treacherously assassinated in the Smolny, Leningrad, on December 1, 1934. The evidence of members of this counter-revolutionary group revealed that they were connected with representatives of foreign capitalist countries and received money from them. It transpired later that this assassination was organized by Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin, on the orders of Trotsky. The miscreants were annihilated on the unanimous demand of the people and by sentence of the proletarian court, which expressed the will of the Soviet people.

*Chapter XVI*

## THE STRUGGLE TO COMPLETE THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM THE STALIN CONSTITUTION

### 61. THE SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM

**Beginning of the Second World War and the U.S.S.R.'s Peace Policy.** From the end of 1933 to the latter half of 1937, the capitalist countries were in a state of economic depression. In the latter half of 1937, a new economic crisis broke out, first in the United States and then in Great Britain, France and other countries.

This new crisis broke out at a time when the Second World War had in fact commenced. In 1935, Italy attacked Abyssinia without declaring war upon her and annexed that country. In the summer of 1936, the imperialists organized military intervention in Spain. In 1937, Japan, after seizing Manchuria, invaded North and Central China. In 1938, Germany annexed Austria and Czechoslovakia. Europe, Africa and Asia were being forcibly changed. The entire system of the post-war, so-called Versailles, peace settlement, was shaken.

The new economic crisis led to the further intensification of the struggle among the imperialist powers. The question of making a new redivision of the world, of spheres of influence and colonies, was now being settled by war. Japan justified her aggressive action on the ground that when the Nine-Power Pact was concluded in 1922, she was not allowed to enlarge her territories at the expense of China. Italy demanded that the losses she had sustained in the First World War should be made up out of the colonial acquisitions of Great Britain and France. Hitler Germany, on the pretext of wanting to regain the colonies she had lost by the Treaty of Versailles and of acquiring territories inhabited by Germans, was openly preparing for a war to establish her world domination. All the capitalist countries, big and small, began feverishly to arm and prepare to take part in a new world war.

The Soviet Union was the only country that undeviatingly upheld the cause of peace. But while pursuing its peace policy, the Land of Soviets strengthened to the utmost its defensive capacity and its international position. At the end of 1934, at the request of thirty-four countries, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in the endeavour to utilize even this feeble organization as a means of hindering the unleashing of war.

With the object of maintaining peace, the Soviet government concluded a series of pacts for mutual assistance in the event of aggress-



sion. The Soviet representatives to the League of Nations demanded that assistance should be rendered the Spanish and Chinese peoples who were heroically fighting the interventionists to preserve their independence.

In July 1938, the Japanese government presented the Soviet Union with a totally groundless claim to U.S.S.R. territory near Lake Hasan, on the Manchurian frontier. The Soviet government rejected this claim.

After this, on July 29, taking advantage of the foggy weather, a Japanese detachment suddenly invaded Soviet territory and captured Bezimyanny Hill near Lake Hasan. The frontier guard, numbering eleven men in all, heroically kept the Japanese detachment of 150 men at bay until reinforcements arrived and beat the Japanese off. The Japanese then launched a wider offensive with larger forces of infantry and artillery. The Far Eastern Red Army was sent to the aid of the Soviet frontier guards and a battle was fought for Zaozerny and Bezimyanny Hills which lasted from August 2 to 6. Among the Japanese forces there were large numbers of Russian Whiteguards. On August 6 Soviet bombing-planes were brought into action against the Japanese. While the Soviet airmen were dropping hundreds of bombs on the Japanese fortifications on the hills, an offensive was begun by Soviet tanks and infantry, who went forward with the battle cry: "Forward! For our Motherland! For our Great Stalin!" The Communists and the Young Communist Leaguers were in the front ranks. Right there in the trenches, in an atmosphere of impending battle, hundreds of non-party Red Army men handed in applications to join the Party. For example, Lieutenant Glotov, one of the heroes of Hasan, wrote in his application: "I ask to be accepted into membership of the C.P.S.U.(B.), and should an enemy bullet strike me down on the battlefield, I request to be counted a Bolshevik."

The Red Army routed the Japanese forces and drove them from Soviet territory.

In 1939, Japanese forces invaded the Mongolian People's Republic in the region of the river Khalkhin-gol. In conformity with the pact of mutual assistance which it had concluded with the Mongolian People's Republic, the Soviet Union came to the assistance of the latter. Red Army units, in conjunction with the Mongolian People's Army, struck a shattering blow at the Japanese troops and drove them from Mongolian territory. The U.S.S.R. thus demonstrated to the whole world how faithfully it carries out its treaty obligations to other countries.

**The Results of the Second Five-Year Plan.** While the capitalist countries were in the throes of an economic crisis and then depression, socialist production continued steadily to rise in the U.S.S.R. By the middle of 1937, world capitalist industry barely reached 95 to 96 per cent of the 1929 level, but the industry of the U.S.S.R. on that date had reached 428 per cent of its 1929 level.

In the U.S.S.R. the building of Socialism was successfully nearing completion. Operations were begun by new industrial giants like the Krivoi Rog Steel Plant and the Stalin Machine-Building Plant in Kramatorsk, the first section of the Moscow subway, and the Moscow-Volga Canal, 128 kilometres long, which connected the Soviet capital with the Volga.

In industry the Second Five-Year Plan was completed by April 1, 1937, that is to say, in four years and three months. With the execution of the First Five-Year Plan the U.S.S.R. had already outstripped France in volume of industrial production. After executing the Second Five-Year Plan it outstripped Great Britain and Germany, and remained second only to the United States. In 1936, the Dnieper Power Plant alone produced more electric power than all the power stations in tsarist Russia put together. The Magnitogorsk plant smelted two and a half times as much pig iron as did all the blast furnaces in Poland. Exceptionally rapid during the Second Five-Year Plan period was the growth of industry in the non-Russian national Soviet Republics. The effect of the wise and farsighted policy pursued by the Party of Lenin and Stalin was that a new centre of heavy industry, coal and oil production, new centres of the machine-building and defence industries, were created in the Eastern regions of the Land of Soviets, out of the range of the enemy.

The main task of the Second Five-Year Plan, namely, to complete the technical reconstruction of the whole of the national economy of the U.S.S.R., was accomplished. The machine-building industry increased its output almost 3-fold. In 1913, the output of machinery in tsarist Russia was only one-tenth of the amount produced in Great Britain, one-eighteenth of that produced in Germany and one-twenty-third of that produced in the United States. At the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period the United States was the only country with an output of twice the amount of machinery produced in the U.S.S.R.

As regards the production of electric power, the U.S.S.R. moved up from fifteenth to second place in Europe, and to third place in the world. In output of tractors the U.S.S.R. reached first place in Europe, and in output of harvester combines it reached first place in the world.

During the period of the two Stalin Five-Year Plans the transport system of the Soviet Union was entirely reconstructed. The production of locomotives, of the most up-to-date types, increased 4-fold compared with 1913. The output of automobiles increased 8-fold in five years. In 1932, the Stalin (formerly AMO) plant turned out 50 cars a day; in 1937, it turned out 205 a day. The number of motor buses in the streets of Moscow and other towns increased and trolley buses were introduced. In 1935, after the heroic Arctic voyages of the icebreaker

*Chelyuskin* and other vessels, there began the exploitation of the Northern Sea Route.

The period of the two Stalin Five-Year Plans also witnessed the consummation of the technical reconstruction of agriculture. Soviet agriculture was now not only conducted on a larger scale than in any other country but had become the most mechanized agriculture in the world. The sown area of all crops increased from 105,000,000 hectares in 1913 to 135,000,000 hectares in 1937. The collective farms in 1937 provided the market with over 27,300,000 tons of grain which was nearly 6,500,000 tons more than the landlords, kulaks and peasants together placed on the market in 1913. The collectivization of agriculture was in the main completed. In 1937, 18,500,000 peasant households, constituting 93 per cent of all the peasant farms in the country, were organized in collective farms, while the grain area of these collective farms covered 99 per cent of the total peasant grain areas in the country.

Industry, agriculture and the transport system received an enormous quantity of new machines and machine tools.

**The Stakhanov Movement.** The Party, headed by Comrade Stalin, drew the masses into the struggle to master the new technique, and the slogan, master technique, became the leading slogan of the Second Stalin Five-Year Plan. An enormous amount of work was done to train workers to become complete masters of modern technique. At the end of 1934, Comrade Stalin said that the most valuable thing that had been created in the process of industrializing the country was skilled cadres. At the beginning of the period of reconstruction, when the country suffered from a lack of modern technique, the Party issued the slogan: "In the period of reconstruction technique decides everything." But when the process of reconstruction was in the main completed, the country suffered from an acute shortage of skilled personnel, that is to say, men and women able to handle the new machines. The Party therefore devoted special attention to the training of such cadres.

In his address to the graduates from the Red Army Academies in May 1935, Comrade Stalin said: "Without people who have mastered technique, technique is dead. In the charge of people who have mastered technique, technique can and should perform miracles." (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 523.) In his address Comrade Stalin advanced the new slogan, "Cadres decide everything."

The best men and women in the country responded to the leader's call with new achievements in their work, achievements which upset all hitherto existing rates of output. On August 31, 1935, Alexei Stakhanov, a hewer in the Central Irmino Colliery, Donetz Basin, in one shift hewed 102 tons of coal as against the shift rate of 7 tons, thus performing the latter 14 1/2-fold. Stakhanov initiated a mass movement among the workers and collective farmers to increase rates

of output, to raise productivity of labour to a higher level. In honour of its initiator, this movement is known as the Stakhanov movement.

Stakhanov's example was followed by workers in other branches of industry, for example, by drop-hammer man Busygin at the Gorky Automobile Plant, the locomotive driver Krivonos in the Donetz Basin, the weavers Vinogradova at the Vichuga Textile Mills, and by many others.

At the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites that was held in the Kremlin, Moscow, in November 1935, Comrade Stalin showed that the Stakhanov movement had sprung up on the basis of the successes achieved by Socialism in our country. It bore within itself, he said, the rudiments of the transition from Socialism to Communism, and of the elimination of the distinction between physical and mental labour, and it marked the beginning of a tremendous cultural and technical development of the working class. "The basis for the Stakhanov movement," he said, "was first and foremost the radical improvement in the material welfare of the workers. Life has improved, comrades. Life has become more joyous. And when life is joyous, work goes well. Hence the high rates of output. Hence the heroes and heroines of labour" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, pp. 531-532). Comrade Stalin called the Stakhanovites innovators in our industry.

The Stakhanov movement spread all over the country, first in the towns and then in the rural districts.

In the period of the Second Five-Year Plan the collective-farm system became fully consolidated. Of exceptional importance for the development and prosperity of the collective farms were the rules for agricultural artels drawn up under Comrade Stalin's direction and adopted at the Second Congress of Collective-Farm Shock Workers held in February 1935. Another extremely important factor was the securing to the collective farms in perpetuity of the land they occupied. Basing their activities on the rules promoted by Stalin, the collective farms made rapid progress towards a prosperous and cultured existence.

In the winter of 1935-36 a series of conferences was held of outstanding workers in the various branches of agriculture and leading members of the Party and of the government. These conferences revealed what splendid people the collective-farm system had produced. The conferences showed the whole country the new heroines of labour produced by the collective-farm system, such splendid women as Maria Demchenko, Pasha Angelina, and many others.

**Liquidation of the Remnants of the Trotskyite-Bukharinite Spies, Wreckers and Traitors.** In their preparation for war against the U.S.S.R. the imperialist governments utilized the services of those traitors to their country, the Trotskyites and Bukharinites.

The trials which took place in the period from 1935 to 1938, revealed that the Bukharinites and Trotskyites had long constituted one common gang of enemies of the people, the bloc of Rights and Trotskyites.

In obedience to the orders of their masters, the foreign, bourgeois intelligence services, the Trotskyites and Bukharinites set out to undermine the defences of our country, to facilitate foreign military intervention, pave the way for the defeat of the Red Army, to dismember the U.S.S.R., surrender the Far Eastern Maritime Region to the Japanese, Soviet Byelorussia to the Poles, Soviet Ukraine to the Germans and the Soviet North to the British, to abolish the gains won by the workers and collective farmers and restore capitalist slavery in the U.S.S.R. The members of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyite-Bukharinite terrorist organizations were exposed, and after trial sentenced by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. to death by shooting.

The fact that these camouflaged enemies of the people had remained undetected for so long was due to the political complacency of many of the members of the Party.

Comrade Stalin urged the necessity of abandoning this political complacency forthwith. Revealing the causes of it, he emphasized that many comrades had forgotten that we were in a capitalist encirclement, and the enemies of the people had taken advantage of this. He called upon the members of the Party and the entire Soviet people to display greater political vigilance and to master the principles of Bolshevism.

## 62. THE GREAT STALIN CONSTITUTION

The enormous social and economic changes which had taken place in the country expressed in the fact that socialist society had in the main been built, and the greater political consciousness and activity of the Soviet people, raised the issue of changing the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. which had been adopted in 1924.

In February 1935, the Seventh Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. instructed the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. to draft a new Constitution. A Constitution Commission headed by Comrade Stalin was set up, which after making the draft, submitted it to the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. for consideration.

In June 1936, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. approved the draft of the Stalin Constitution and submitted it for public discussion in order that the workers, collective farmers and the Soviet intelligentsia might express their opinion on it and propose any amendments they deemed fit. The draft of the new Constitution was publicly discussed by the Soviet people all through the summer and autumn of 1936 and met with universal approval.

On December 5, 1936, the Extraordinary Eighth All-Union Congress of Soviets adopted the first Constitution of victorious Socialism in history.

In his report on the draft Constitution, Comrade Stalin summed up the magnificent results achieved in the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. During the preceding twelve years (from 1924 when the first Constitution was adopted, to 1936) immense changes had taken place in the economy and class structure of society, he said. The socialist system had fully triumphed, the exploiting classes had been liquidated. The landlord class and the big imperialist bourgeoisie had already been utterly routed during the Civil War. During the period of socialist construction, all the exploiting elements—capitalists, merchants, kulaks, and profiteers—were liquidated.

Under the Soviet system the workers, peasants and intelligentsia had undergone a profound change. The working class had ceased to be a proletariat in the strict sense of the term, *i.e.*, had ceased to be an exploited class. It has been converted into a new working class, a class which had abolished the capitalist economic system and had established the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production. An entirely new peasantry, a collective-farm peasantry, had grown up in the U.S.S.R., for collective farming was based not on private, but on socialist property, the product of collective labour.

The intelligentsia in the U.S.S.R. had also undergone a radical change. Having sprung in the main from the ranks of the workers and peasants they had become active builders of socialist society.

As regards the different nationalities in the U.S.S.R. Comrade Stalin said: "... their feeling of mutual distrust has disappeared, a feeling of mutual friendship has developed among them, and thus real fraternal co-operation among the peoples has been established within the system of a single federated state" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 547).

Soviet society consists of two friendly classes—the workers and the peasants, between whom there is no antagonism, although some class distinctions still remain between them. The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. recorded the fact that the Soviet Union is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

The political foundation of the U.S.S.R. is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which grew and became strong as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the conquest of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The economic foundation of the U.S.S.R. is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means of production.

The U.S.S.R. is a voluntary, fraternal union of equal nations. Each of the sixteen republics comprising the Union independently

settles all questions of state, except those that affect the Soviet Union as a whole.

The state structure of the U.S.S.R. guarantees the equality and the protection of the national interests of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., big and small. The Supreme Soviet consists of two chambers with equal rights—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, which safeguards the specific interests of the working people arising from their specific national features.

All over the world, wherever the bourgeoisie rules, some nations are oppressed by others. Our Socialist Motherland carefully safeguards the rights of every nation and proclaims the preaching of national or race exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, as a crime against the state punishable by law.

The Soviet Union unites about sixty nations, national groups and nationalities. A multi-national state has been built up with Socialism as its foundation. It is based not on oppression, but on the fraternal co-operation and friendship of the peoples. As Comrade Stalin has said: "... Friendship among the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is a great and important achievement. For as long as this friendship exists, the peoples of our country will be free and invincible" ("Speeches," Part 2. "Speech at a Conference of the Foremost Collective Farmers of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan," Moscow, 1935, p. 23).

The state power and state administration in the U.S.S.R. are built up on the principles of genuine democratism and on drawing large numbers of the working people into the work of governing the Soviet State. The local organs of state power in our country—the Territorial, Regional, Area, District, City and Village Soviets of Working People's Deputies—enjoy wide powers.

The election of all Soviet organs takes place on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, and secret ballot. The Stalin Constitution abolished the restrictions on electoral rights that had existed hitherto, as the exploiting classes had been abolished in the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet system is the most democratic system in the world, for it safeguards the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, whereas bourgeois democracy in any form is democracy for a ruling minority. The Stalin Constitution shows that our system of state is a model of the most consistent socialist democracy.

The Soviet system places no restrictions upon electoral rights, whereas in all bourgeois countries various qualifications such as property, domiciliary and educational qualifications, are widely imposed in the interests of the capitalists. In capitalist countries the electoral rights of the inhabitants of colonies and of so-called "national minorities" are, as a rule, restricted.

! A disgraceful blot on many bourgeois Constitutions is that they

either entirely deprive women of electoral rights, or restrict those rights for women.

In the U.S.S.R. women enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of the economic, governmental, cultural and public and political life of the country. The most distinguished daughters of the Soviet people are members of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., of the Supreme Soviets of Union and Autonomous Republics, and of local Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Thanks to the victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., the dream of the best representatives of human society has come true; everybody is ensured the right to work, to rest and recreation, to education and to maintenance in old age and in the event of disablement.

The Constitution guarantees for the citizens of the U.S.S.R. freedom of speech, press, assembly and meetings, street processions and demonstrations, and safeguards the right of citizens to unite in public organizations (trade unions, co-operative societies, etc., and for the most active and politically conscious citizens the right to unite in the Communist Party).

The Stalin Constitution not only proclaims all the rights of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. (as the Constitutions of bourgeois countries do in relation to the rights of citizens), but also ensures the material conditions for enjoying these rights.

The Soviet system, while guaranteeing great rights to the citizens of the U.S.S.R. imposes upon them a number of lofty and honourable duties. Work in the U.S.S.R. is a duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen. It is the duty of citizens of the U.S.S.R. to abide by the Constitution of the U.S.S.R., observe the laws, maintain labour discipline, honestly perform public duties and respect the rules of socialist intercourse. It is the duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R. to safeguard and fortify socialist property. It is a duty of honour for citizens of the U.S.S.R. to serve in the ranks of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R.

The Land of Soviets received a new Constitution, the Constitution of victorious Socialism. The adoption of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. caused tremendous rejoicing among the peoples of the Soviet Union.

During the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. which were held on December 12, 1937, the Communist Party put forward candidates in a bloc with non-party people. The Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.) called for votes to be cast for the candidates of this bloc. It was a call addressed to all those who wanted our country to remain mighty, cultured and free, the working people to be free from exploitation forever, our industry to continue to develop and outstrip the capitalist countries, our collective farms and state farms to continue to flourish and provide our country with an abundance of agricultural produce; it was addressed to all who wanted our working



people to continue to be free from unemployment and uncertainty as to the morrow, and our women to continue to be free and equal in all branches of economy and administration, who wanted the science, literature and art of the peoples of the Soviet Union to develop and the peoples themselves to remain free and equal, and the working people of the U.S.S.R. to continue to enjoy the blessings of peaceful labour.

In response to this appeal about 90,000,000 voters (98.6 per cent of all those who went to the poll) cast their votes for the candidates of the bloc of Communists and non-party people.

The first candidate that the towns, collective farms and national republics unanimously nominated was the leader of the peoples, the creator of the Constitution, their beloved father and friend, Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin consented to stand for the Stalin electoral district of Moscow. On December 11, 1937, on the eve of the election, Comrade Stalin addressed his electors, and said, "A Deputy should know that he is the servant of the people, their emissary in the Supreme Soviet, and that he must follow the line laid down in the mandate given him by the people. If he turns off the road, the electors are entitled to demand new elections, and as to the Deputy who turned off the road, they have the right to send him packing . . . ." Dealing with the rights and duties of the electors, Comrade Stalin also indicated the sort of person a Deputy elected by the people should be. Comrade Stalin said: "It is the duty and right of the electors to keep their Deputies constantly under their control and to impress upon them that they must under no circumstance sink to the level of political philistines, impress upon them that they must be like the great Lenin" ("Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Voters of the Stalin Electoral Area, Moscow, December 11, 1937, in the Bolshoi Theatre," Moscow, 1945, pp. 11-15).

The elections to the Supreme Soviet were virtually a nation-wide festival. The unanimity then displayed has never been witnessed in any election in any other country in the world.

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. is a genuine people's Soviet parliament. The Supreme Soviet (first convocation) settled a number of extremely important questions of state.

The first elections to the Supreme Soviet were a mighty demonstration of the moral and political unity of the Soviet people, a demonstration of its close solidarity with the Party of Lenin and Stalin and with its leader. As Comrade Molotov said: "The moral and political unity of the people of our country has its living incarnation. We have a name that has become the symbol of the victory of Socialism. That name is also a symbol of the moral and political unity of the Soviet people. You know that that name is—Stalin!"

### 63. THE U.S.S.R. ENTERS THE PHASE OF COMPLETING THE BUILDING OF SOCIALISM

**The Third Five-Year Plan.** The Great Stalin Constitution legislatively enacted the world-historical fact that the U.S.S.R. had entered a new phase of development, the phase of the completion of the building of socialist society and of the gradual transition to Communism.

The Stalin Constitution records the main pillars of Socialism as follows: the absence of exploitation of man by man, the conversion of the means of production into socialist property, the fulfilment of the fundamental principle of Socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

In the U.S.S.R., Socialism—the lower phase of Communism—has already been achieved. At this stage the distinctions between town and country and between mental and physical labour have not yet been abolished. Under Socialism, the survivals of capitalism still remain in the minds of men.

The victory of the two Stalin Five-Year Plans created all the conditions for the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism, under which the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" will be applied. The productive forces in our country are freed from the fetters of capitalism, the U.S.S.R.'s complete independence of capitalist countries is ensured, the socialist reconstruction of the entire national economy on the basis of new, most up-to-date technique has been completed, the nation-wide Stakhanov movement is steadily raising the productivity of labour, the material and cultural well-being of the entire Soviet people is improving and the borderlines between town and country and between mental and physical labour are gradually being obliterated.

In March 1939, the Eighteenth Congress of the Party was held. In the historic report that he made at this congress, Comrade Stalin said that Communist society could not be built unless the fundamental condition was carried out of overtaking and outstripping the capitalist world not only as regards level of technical development but also economically. As regards the level of technical development the Soviet Union had outstripped the principal capitalist countries; but it still lagged behind them in respect to output per head of the population. As regards pig iron, for example, the U.S.S.R. produced per head of the population less than half of that produced in Great Britain and France, and one-third of that produced in the United States. The electricity generated in our country per head of the population was half that of France, one-third that of Great Britain, two-sevenths that of Germany and one-fifth that of the United States.

Comrade Stalin said:

"We have outstripped the principal capitalist countries as regards technique of production and rate of industrial development. That is very good, but it is not enough. We must outstrip them economically as well. We can do it, and we must do it. Only if we outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically can we reckon upon our country being fully saturated with consumers' goods, on having an abundance of products, and on being able to make the transition from the first phase of Communism to its second phase" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 610).

In this report Comrade Stalin also dealt with extremely important theoretical questions such as, for example, the intelligentsia and the state. As regards the latter question he emphasized that under Communism the state will remain "unless the capitalist encirclement is liquidated, and unless the danger of foreign military attack has disappeared" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 637).

At this congress Comrade Molotov delivered a report in which he summed up the triumphant fulfilment of the Second Five-Year Plan ahead of time and outlined the Third Stalin Five-Year Plan. The Third Five-Year Plan was a continuation of the Second and First Five-Year Plans, and its keynote was the further industrialization of the country.

The Third Five-Year Plan provided for the strengthening of the defensive power of the Soviet State on a larger scale than was the case in the first two Five-Year Plans. It took into account the possibility of an attack upon the U.S.S.R. from the West, and provided for the erection in the Eastern regions of the country of duplicate plants in the machine-building, oil-refining and chemical industries. It also provided for the creation of a new centre of the textile industry in Central Asia and for an exceptionally rapid increase in the output of coal and cement in the Soviet Far East. The pride of the Third Five-Year Plan was the "Second Baku" and the Kuibyshev hydroelectric power project—the largest of its kind in the world—that was to irrigate the arid lands of the trans-Volga Region. In the first years of the Third Five-Year Plan period hundreds of new industrial plants were completed and put into operation. In particular, the Magnitogorsk Steel Plant in the Urals was completed. The grand program for the further transformation of our motherland was to have been completed in 1942. After that a Fifteen-Year Plan for the development of our national economy was contemplated with the object of converting our motherland economically into the most advanced and richest country in the world.

During the first three years the fulfilment and overfulfilment of the plan proceeded successfully, but in the summer of 1941, our peaceful labours were interrupted by the perfidious attack of the German fascist robbers upon the Soviet Union.

### Labour and Political Enthusiasm in the Land of Socialism.

The decisions that were adopted by the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B.) placed in the hands of the working people of our country a powerful weapon for the achievement of further victories and roused them to unprecedented heights of labour and political enthusiasm. Socialist emulation in honour of the Third Stalin Five-Year Plan developed on a wide scale throughout the country. The ranks of the heroes of labour grew with unprecedented rapidity. New names of workers and collective farmers, men and women, of people working in the sphere of culture and technology, science and art, became famous throughout the country and roused thousands to perform new feats of valour. As the popular Soviet song says: "Any one of us can become a hero."

The title of Hero of Socialist Labour was instituted in the U.S.S.R.

The government conferred the title of Hero of Socialist Labour on Comrade Stalin on his sixtieth birthday.

The high title of distinction—Hero of the Soviet Union—was also instituted. The first Heroes of the Soviet Union were the valiant airmen who rescued the passengers of the wrecked *Chelyuskin* from the ice in the Arctic. The rescue of the "Chelyuskinites" was a model of the unexampled heroism and Bolshevik capacity for organization displayed by Soviet people. The roll of Heroes of the Soviet Union was augmented by the names of valiant commanders and men of the Red Army who won fame for themselves and their Soviet Motherland by their unprecedented deeds.

The first women to have the title of Hero of the Soviet Union conferred upon them were those splendid aviators Valentina Grizodubova, Marina Raskova and Paulina Osipenko.

The capitalist encirclement of the U.S.S.R. and the growing war danger arising from the fact that the capitalist countries were "creeping" into the Second World War created the necessity of strengthening the defences of the U.S.S.R., of reinforcing the Red Army, the Red Air Force and the Red Navy.

The people surrounded their army with love and care. In the speech he delivered on the Tenth Anniversary of the Red Army, Comrade Stalin said: "Nowhere in the world do the people treat the army with such love and solicitude as our people do. . . . Our army is the only army in the world that enjoys the sympathy and support of the workers and peasants. Herein lies its power, herein lies its strength" (J. Stalin, *The Three Specific Features of the Red Army*, Moscow, 1940, Russ. ed., p. 5). The men, commanders and political instructors of the Red Army and the Red Navy are the finest sons of the people, selflessly devoted to their great motherland. The army and the navy live in unison with the whole country.

#### 64. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN THE U.S.S.R.

The almost two-fold increase in the national income during the Second Five-Year Plan period and the growth of prosperity among the working people of the U.S.S.R. created a firm foundation for the steady improvement of their cultural standards.

During the period of the first two Five-Year Plans universal compulsory elementary education was introduced throughout the country, with universal seven-year education in the towns.

The number of pupils attending elementary and high schools rose to 33,000,000 at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period, compared with 8,000,000 in 1914. More schools were built in the U.S.S.R. in the course of twenty years than were built during 200 years in tsarist Russia. After the revolution a wide network of higher educational establishments (universities, etc.) was created, and in 1939, they were attended by 600,000 students, nearly six times the number that attended such establishments in tsarist Russia. The number of students attending higher educational establishments in the U.S.S.R. exceeds that of twenty-three capitalist countries put together. Before the revolution there were seventy higher educational establishments in the territory of what is now the R.S.F.S.R.; in 1937 there were 435. In the Ukraine there were nineteen higher educational establishments before the revolution; at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period there were 123. In Georgia there was only one before the revolution, but during the period of the Stalin Five-Year Plans nineteen were opened. In the other non-Russian national republics there was not a single higher educational establishment, but under Soviet rule over one hundred were opened. The number of pupils and students attending schools and higher educational establishments of all types in the U.S.S.R. in 1939 was 47,500,000, or over one-fourth of the entire population.

Many of the nationalities which had not possessed an alphabet before, acquired one under the Soviet system, opened schools in which instruction was conducted in the native language, and created their own literature, theatre and intelligentsia.

In 1936 alone, 183,000,000 copies of books printed in the languages of the various peoples of the U.S.S.R. were published, not counting books published in Russian. Newspapers in the U.S.S.R. are published in fifty-nine languages and books in 111 languages. The total circulation of newspapers increased 14-fold, by comparison with the figures for tsarist Russia. The number of libraries, reading rooms, recreation clubs, theatres, cinemas, stadiums, athletic grounds and village laboratories grows from year to year.

The Soviet intelligentsia, which during the Second Five-Year Plan period grew to 9,600,000 persons, will grow still more as the main

task is fulfilled in the sphere of cultural development, namely, to raise the cultural and technical level of the entire working class to that of the engineer and technician.

Exceptionally great is the role played in the Soviet Union by science, that progressive science which does not divorce itself from the people and which serves the cause of Socialism. Comrade Stalin referred to Papanin and Stakhanov as innovators in science, for they had set examples of how bold practice can be combined with serious scientific research.

In the U.S.S.R. science is closely connected with the practical work of building Socialism. Soviet science helps to build huge hydroelectric power stations, to carry out such gigantic projects as the Moscow-Volga Canal, the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal, the Moscow Subway, the finest in the world, and others. Soviet designers have designed scores of new types of machines, machine tools and instruments. Exceptionally great are the successes which Soviet scientific and technical thought has achieved in the sphere of aviation. The excellent design and high technical equipment of Soviet aeroplanes, hydroplanes, etc., have enabled Soviet airmen to establish world records.

In July 1936, that great airman of our time, Valeri Pavlovich Chkalov and his comrades performed a tremendous circular flight over the Soviet North and East. In March 1937, an expedition flew to the North Pole. The aircraft which took part in this expedition were flown by our finest aviators, headed by Hero of the Soviet Union Vodopyanov. In May the aircraft landed at the North Pole and left on the ice four valiant Soviet patriots, headed by Papanin. Papanin and his comrades drifted on the ice for 274 days and covered 2,500 kilometres, conducting, under exceptionally difficult conditions, intense scientific research work which enriched world science with new data on the Arctic.

On June 18-19, 1937, our hero aviators Chkalov, Baidukov and Belyakov, in spite of cyclones and ice crust, flew from Moscow to America across the North Pole; and a month later this flight was repeated by Gromov, Yumashev and Danilin, who established a new



I. V. Michurin



Maxim Gorky

record in long-distance flying. All these flights were undertaken with the scientific object of finding a route to America across the North Pole.

Similarly important scientific work was conducted in 1938-1939 by the valiant crew of the icebreaker *Sedov*.

Soviet agricultural science is helping to change nature in our country. The discoveries made by that brilliant geneticist Michurin remained unrecognized for forty-five years before the revolution, and it was only under the Soviet regime that they acquired wide fame. Michurin was given the opportunity to continue, on a huge scale and on a wide scientific basis, his experiments in crossing

plants and obtaining new species, hybrids. Academician Lysenko, the son of a peasant, who is continuing the work of Michurin, has applied that great horticulturist's methods to the development of field crops. He worked out the theory of stages in the development of plants and found a method of vernalizing wheat which greatly increases the yield. Academician V. R. Williams, a Bolshevik, worked out the theory of the rotation of grass crops. Academician Tsitsin, by crossing wheat with couch grass, produced a new variety of perennial wheat that is impervious to drought. In a conversation he had with Academician Tsitsin, Comrade Stalin said: "Be bolder in your experiments, we will support you." Together with our Soviet scientists, and under their direction, thousands of front-rank collective farmers are carrying on scientific research in village laboratories and experimental fields to produce varieties of drought-resisting, high-yielding agricultural plants.

Physics, mathematics, physiology and other sciences have made enormous progress in our country. Problems of agro-physics, solar radiation and photo-chemical conversion are being successfully solved. Our Soviet mathematician, Academician Vinogradov, found a brilliant solution for Holbach's problem, on which the greatest mathematicians all over the world had been working for nearly 200 years.

The work of the great Russian scientist and father of modern physiology, Academician I. P. Pavlov, enriched world science with new

achievements in the study of the higher nervous activity of animals. This work was able to assume the dimensions it deserved only under the Soviet system, a whole townlet of laboratories having been built for Pavlov and his assistants in Koltushi, near Leningrad.

In the U.S.S.R. not only scientific experimental work, but also scientific theoretical work is being developed as in no other country in the world. In the U.S.S.R. the great Marxist-Leninist theory has unlimited possibilities for development. The works of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin are published in editions running into millions. Extremely popular among the broad masses of the working people of our country are works on the history of



V. V. Mayakovsky

our motherland and of the Bolshevik Party. The year 1938 saw the appearance of Stalin's work, *the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolsheviks], Short Course*. This splendid scientific work contains a concise and vivid account of the long and glorious historical road traversed by the Party of Lenin and Stalin and of the fighting experience it gained, as well as an exposition of the foundations of the Marxist-Leninist theory.

In the U.S.S.R. there have been established treasure stores of scientific books that are of world importance. These are the Lenin Library in Moscow, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad, and others.

Enormous scientific work is being conducted by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and its numerous institutes, and also by such world-important scientific-research institutes as the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, and others.

Socialism created fertile soil for the vigorous growth of the art of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. The Great October Socialist Revolution, which emancipated the peoples, gave the broad masses access to all the treasures of culture and art created by mankind.

An enormous contribution to the development of revolutionary literature in the Soviet period was made by the great proletarian





The Kazakh Bard Jambul  
Jabayev

writer and devoted friend of the working people Maxim Gorky. In 1921, Gorky fell very sick and on Lenin's insistence he went to Italy to recuperate; but while there he kept in close touch with his Soviet Motherland, with the working people of the U.S.S.R. In Italy he wrote *My Universities*, *The Rise and Fall of the Artamonovs*, and the first volume of *The Life of Klim Samgin*. When, in 1928, he returned to his native land he enthusiastically devoted his efforts to the creation of a new, socialist culture in the U.S.S.R. He was the initiator and inspirer of numerous literary and educational undertakings. For the outstanding services he had rendered the working class of the U.S.S.R. he was awarded the Order of Lenin.

The great humanitarian Gorky passionately hated the enemies of the people and of Socialism, and above all he hated fascism. He defined his attitude to the enemies of the people in the words: "If the enemy does not surrender, he must be destroyed." The enemies of the people—the Trotskyites—killed the great, popular writer and fighter.

The revolution gave an impetus to the development of the art of the most talented poet of the Soviet epoch V. V. Mayakovsky (1893-1930). His verses and poems of the pre-revolutionary period breathe hatred for the bourgeois system; to the service of the revolution he devoted all his tremendous talent. He wrote verses, drew posters and created splendid poems on the revolution, such as, *150,000,000*, *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin*, *Good*, and others. During the Civil War he founded the ROSTA "Windows," i.e., a series of political propaganda posters which called for the struggle to establish the power of the Soviets and praised the heroes of labour.

Soviet authors have produced a number of vivid stories dealing with the proletarian revolution, the Civil War and the building of Socialism. Of these mention can be made of Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned*, Fadeyev's *Defeat* and *The Last of the Udegei*, Furmanov's *Chapayev*, Serafimovich's *Iron Flood*, Bagritsky's *The Lay of Opanas*, and others. Extremely popular are the historical novels written by Soviet writers such as A. N. Tolstoy's *Peter I*, Novikov-Priboi's *Tsushima*, Tynyanov's novels on Griboyedov and Pushkin, and others. Extremely popular among Soviet readers

are *How the Steel Was Tempered* and *Born of the Storm* by Nikolai Ostrovsky, whose life and work were imbued with genuine revolutionary fervour. Although blind and paralyzed as a consequence of the severe wounds he received during the Civil War and the illness he suffered after it, this young Bolshevik writer found the courage and strength to continue to serve the Party and the revolution with his pen until he drew his last breath.

Comrade Stalin described Soviet writers as the "engineers of human souls," and called upon them to produce works that harmonized with the great epoch we are living in. At a congress of writers, Comrade A. A. Zhdanov spoke of the tasks that confronted Soviet writers and said: "To be an engineer of human souls means standing with both feet on the ground of real life. . . . Soviet literature must be able to portray our heroes, must be able to see into our future."

The culture of the Land of Soviets, uniform in its socialist trend and heroic content, and with its rich variety of form, was built up as the sole, socialist culture of all the peoples who inhabit the U.S.S.R. The culture of each people, national in form and socialist in content, develops in close alliance with the culture of all the other peoples of the Union, and primarily with progressive Russian culture. National culture springs from the depths of the people.

The most outstanding and characteristic representative of this culture was the aged popular poet of Kazakhstan, the akyn (bard) Jambul. He began to compose his beautiful songs while still a youth when wandering through the steppes of Kazakhstan; but his art seemed to have faded before he reached the age of fifty. The great proletarian revolution, however, rejuvenated the heart of the seventy-year-old bard.

The proletarian revolution performed the same miracle on the popular ashug (poet) of Daghestan, Suleiman Stalsky. The son of a poor Lezghian peasant, he grew up amidst great privation. His songs were composed in tones of grief and melancholy. When he composed songs that sounded the call to battle the tsarist authorities put a ban upon them. The art of Suleiman Stalsky, this Homer of the 20th century, as Maxim Gorky called him, revived and blossomed forth again



The Daghestan Poet Suleiman Stalsky

under Socialism. His poems "Daghestan," "A Song of Comrade Stalin," "Thoughts about My Country," "A Poem about Sergo," and others, are truly magnificent.

P. G. Tykhina, the most outstanding modern poet in the Ukraine, is closely connected with the working class. His book of verse entitled *The Party Leads*, breathes deep sincerity and love for the people.

Yanka Kupala, the outstanding people's poet of Byelorussia, the son of a peasant, started work as an unskilled labourer, became a writer and was eventually elected a member of the Academy of Sciences. He commenced his literary activities as early as 1905, but his art really blossomed forth only under the Soviet system. His verses and poems dealing with collective-farm life are particularly popular.

Akop Akopyan, the people's poet of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, was the first Armenian proletarian writer to devote his poems to the life and labours of the workers.

The folk songs of the peoples of the Soviet Union have revived. The people's bards, poets and narrators compose an exceptionally large number of songs about Lenin and Stalin.

Art is making tremendous strides in our country. The Soviet theatre occupies first place in Europe for artistic achievements. It has rich classical traditions and presents classical Russian and foreign plays with profound artistic realism, and in portraying former Russia it cultivates among our people a hatred of oppression and a love for our Soviet Motherland.

The first Soviet plays dealt with the revolution and the Civil War, and they have become a permanent part of the repertoire of the Soviet theatre.

Soviet and historical revolutionary themes also inspire our composers, who have composed symphonies and operas remarkable for their design and the ideas they express.

The Soviet cinema—that most important and most popular form of art—is flourishing. The Soviet films *Chapayev*, *We Are From Kronstadt*, *Lenin in October*, *Lenin in 1918*, the *Maxim* trilogy, *Sichors*, *The Great Citizen*, *Member of the Government* and others, thrill millions of spectators not only in the U.S.S.R. but also abroad.

Great successes have been achieved by the theatre and music of the non-Russian Soviet Republics. In the Ukraine a galaxy of young composers has sprung up who utilize the rich folklore of the Ukraine for their symphonies and operas.

The creator of Georgian opera music is the "Georgian Glinka," Zakhari Paliashvili, who before the revolution composed the opera *Abessalom and Eteri* and in 1924 the opera *Daissi*, which is popular not only in Georgia but all over the U.S.S.R.

The founder of Soviet opera in Azerbaijan is the composer Hajibekov, who after the revolution composed the opera *Ker Ogly*. Of the works



V. I. Lenin  
*Sculpture by Merkurov*



J. V. Stalin  
*Sculpture by Merkurov*

he composed before the revolution exceptionally popular is his opera *Leyly and Medjnun*.

One of the creators of Armenian music was the pre-revolution composer Komitas, who skillfully utilized Armenian folklore and exercised considerable influence on the subsequent development of Armenian music. An important part in developing the theatre and music in Armenia under the Soviet system was played by the composer Spendiaryov, whose best productions are the opera *Almast* and his *Brevan Etudes*.

Considerable success was also achieved by the theatre and music in Uzbekistan, where there had been no theatres at all before the revolu-

tion. The operas *Farhad and Shirin*, *Gulsara*, and others are extremely popular.

Kazakh and Kirghiz theatres came into being. Peoples who not long ago had no knowledge of written music, have now produced their own composers, musicians and opera singers.

The Party and the government search out and carefully train thousands of talented people who would have had no opportunity for developing their talent under tsarism. Often singers and musicians may be heard in the theatres of the capital who only recently have been working in the collective-farm fields or in the factories. Soviet musicians carry off the prizes at international pianoforte and violin competitions.

Poets, singers, actors, musicians and artists enjoy the love and respect of the Soviet people. Many of them have been elected as Deputies to Supreme Soviets. The flourishing culture of the U.S.S.R. demonstrates to the whole world how much brilliant talent is produced under the socialist system. It is with legitimate pride that the Soviet people look back on the historical road they have traversed and remember the words of the great Stalin:

"It is pleasant and joyful to know what our people fought for and how they achieved this victory of world-wide historical importance. It is pleasant and joyful to know that the blood our people shed so plentifully was not shed in vain, that it has produced results. This arms our working class, our peasantry, our working intelligentsia spiritually. It impels them forward and rouses a sense of legitimate pride. It increases confidence in our strength and mobilizes us for fresh struggles for the achievement of new victories of Communism" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, p. 568).

## 65. THE FIGHT FOR PEACE AMIDST THE CONDITIONS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

**The U.S.S.R.'s Fight for Peace.** In the report he delivered at the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) that was held in March 1939, Comrade Stalin formulated the U.S.S.R.'s foreign policy in the following words:

"The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is clear and explicit.

"1. We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.

"2. We stand for peaceful, close and friendly relations with all the neighbouring countries which have common frontiers with the U.S.S.R. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as

these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass, directly or indirectly, on the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet State.

"3. We stand for the support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country.

"4. We are not afraid of the threats of aggressors, and are ready to deal two blows for every blow delivered by instigators of war who attempt to violate the Soviet borders" (J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1947, pp. 605-6).

Comrade Stalin proposed that this peace policy be continued so as to prevent the provocators of war from dragging the U.S.S.R. into a conflict.

Taking into account the growing danger of the outbreak of another world war and the direct menace of an attack upon the U.S.S.R., the Soviet government opened negotiations with the representatives of Great Britain and France for the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance against fascist aggression in Europe; but these negotiations failed owing to the intrigues of the extreme reactionary circles in those countries who were hostile to the U.S.S.R., and who wanted, by striking a bargain with fascist Germany, to turn the latter's aggression exclusively against the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the German government offered to conclude a pact of non-aggression with the U.S.S.R. This pact established a basis for ensuring peace between the two biggest states in Europe, the relations between whom had been very strained since the fascists came into power in Germany. It also gave the Soviet Union the opportunity to prepare her forces appropriately for the contingency of fascist Germany attacking her. In view of this, the Soviet government consented to conclude the pact of non-aggression which Germany proposed.

This pact, which was signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939, stated: "The two high contracting parties engage to refrain from all violence, from all aggressive actions, and from any attack upon each other either singly, or in conjunction with other powers."

In the radio address which he delivered on July 3, 1941, Comrade Stalin summed up the historic significance of the pact of non-aggression that was concluded between the Soviet Union and Germany in the following words:

"It may be asked: How could the Soviet government have consented to conclude a non-aggression pact with such perfidious people, and such fiends as Hitler and Ribbentrop? . . . A non-aggression pact is a pact of peace between two states. It was precisely such a pact that Germany proposed to us in 1939. Could the Soviet government decline such a proposal? I think that not a single peace-loving state could decline a peace treaty with a neighbouring country even if that country is headed by such monsters and cannibals as Hitler and Ribbentrop.

But that, of course, only on the one indispensable condition that this peace treaty did not jeopardize, either directly or indirectly, the territorial integrity, independence and honour of the peace-loving state. As is well known, the non-aggression pact between Germany and the U.S.S.R. was precisely such a pact.

"What did we gain by concluding the non-aggression pact with Germany? We secured our country peace for a year and a half and the opportunity of preparing our forces to repulse fascist Germany should she risk an attack on our country despite the pact" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 11).

Subsequent events proved that the Soviet government had taken a correct stand. On September 1, 1939, fascist Germany attacked Poland. Shortly after that, the war spread over the whole of Europe. First, Great Britain and France, who were bound by treaty obligations with Poland, entered it. In April 1940, Germany commenced to seize the Scandinavian countries, and started with Norway. In May 1940, Germany invaded Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Luxemburg.

In this way a bridgehead was created in Europe for developing an offensive against France and against Great Britain. In June 1940, Italy joined Germany and declared war on Great Britain and France.

Adhering faithfully to its peace policy, the Soviet government took a series of steps to avert the war danger. It proclaimed the neutrality of the U.S.S.R. and while strictly adhering to it, took measures to ensure the country's security against foreign enemies.

The wise foreign policy pursued by the Soviet government still further enhanced the role the U.S.S.R. was playing in the settlement of international questions and raised its prestige in the eyes of the working people all over the world.

**The Re-Union of Western Ukraine with the Ukrainian S.S.R. and of Western Byelorussia with the Byelorussian S.S.R.** Soon after the opening of hostilities the Polish forces were crushed and the Polish government went abroad, leaving the people of Poland to their fate.

In view of these circumstances, the Soviet government could not remain indifferent to the fate of its kinsmen, the Ukrainians and Byelorussians who inhabited Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. Moreover, the situation in Poland was fraught with contingencies that were dangerous to the U.S.S.R.

On September 17, 1939, Comrade Molotov, then the head of the Soviet government, delivered a radio address in which he announced that the Soviet government had instructed the Supreme Command of the Red Army to order our troops to cross the frontier to protect

the lives and property of the inhabitants of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

The Byelorussians and Ukrainians living in Poland were bereft of rights. Their languages, culture and national customs were subjected to persecution. The Ukrainian and Byelorussian national schools had been suppressed and the majority of the inhabitants of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia were illiterate. Ukrainians and Byelorussians were barred from posts in the service of the state. In the eastern borderlands, called "kresy" by the Polish government, almost the entire land belonged to Polish landlords and the peasants possessed tiny plots of land which were barely enough to provide an existence of semi-starvation. Furthermore, the Polish government colonized these regions with "settlers," that is, Polish kulaks.

More than once the peasants of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia rose in revolt against the Polish gentry, but the Polish government sent punitive detachments into these regions and the revolts were suppressed with great cruelty.

The Polish government prevented the development of industry in the "kresy." Notwithstanding the immense natural wealth, industry in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia was cut down, as the Polish government regarded the "kresy" merely as an agricultural and raw-material base for the industry of Poland proper. The workers in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia suffered from unemployment, and the wages they received were only a half or even a third of those paid to workers in the central and western regions of Poland.

The conditions of the intelligentsia in these regions were also extremely hard. Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Jews were almost entirely barred from high schools and colleges, and even if some man-



Poster Illustrating the Meeting Between the Red Army and the Working People of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia



aged to obtain a university education at the cost of enormous sacrifice, they found no outlet for their knowledge and abilities.

All this explains why the working people of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia welcomed their liberator, the Red Army, with tremendous rejoicing.

In Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia Popular Assemblies were elected on the broad democratic basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot. In obedience to the will of the people, the Popular Assemblies of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia proclaimed the establishment of Soviet power in their respective territories and decided on the confiscation of the land of the landlords, monasteries and high government officials, and the transfer of this land, without compensation, to the working peasants. They also proclaimed the nationalization of the banks and large-scale industry. The Popular Assemblies requested the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to accept the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia into the great family of Soviet people. At its session on November 1 and 2, 1939, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. granted the request of the working people of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

**Strengthening the Security of the Northwestern Frontiers of the U.S.S.R.** The outbreak of the Second World War confronted the Soviet government with the urgent task of strengthening the security of the northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet government offered to conclude with the Finnish government a treaty on terms that were to the advantage of both countries and which would have guaranteed the security of the northwestern frontiers of the U.S.S.R. and of Leningrad in particular. The Finnish government entered into negotiations with the government of the U.S.S.R., but during the course of them it took an uncompromisingly hostile stand. The Finnish militarists began to commit acts of provocation on the Soviet-Finnish frontier and went to the length of shelling the Soviet frontier posts near Leningrad. In view of this, Comrade Molotov, as head of the Soviet government, announced in the radio address he delivered on November 29, 1939, that, faced with the fact that Finnish troops had attacked the Soviet frontiers, the Soviet government was obliged to recall its political and business representatives from Finland and to order the Red Army to repel every sortie by the Finnish militarists. In this address Comrade Molotov exposed the slanderous inventions of the foreign bourgeois press which falsely asserted that the U.S.S.R. intended to seize and annex Finland, or establish Soviet rule there. Comrade Molotov said: "We stand firmly for allowing the Finnish people themselves to settle their internal and foreign affairs in the way they deem fit. . . . The only object of the measures we have undertaken is to ensure the security

of the Soviet Union, and particularly of Leningrad with its three and a half million population."

The Finnish militarists, who had long been in contact with the German fascists and were egged on by anti-Soviet quarters in certain imperialist countries, commenced war against the Soviet Union. Despite the exceptional difficulties of the terrain and the temperature, being 50° below zero Centigrade—the Red Army broke through the fortifications of the Karelian Isthmus, which had been built in conformity with the most up-to-date rules of military engineering and had been regarded as impregnable.

The White Finnish army was defeated, losing over half its manpower in killed and wounded.

The Finnish government was obliged to sue for peace.

On March 12, 1940, peace was signed with Finland. A new state frontier was drawn between the U.S.S.R. and Finland which ensured the security of Leningrad and Murmansk. The whole of the Karelian Isthmus with the city of Vyborg and Gulf of Vyborg, were incorporated in the U.S.S.R. The governments of Finland and the U.S.S.R. mutually engaged to refrain from aggression against each other and to take no part in any alliance directed against either of the contracting parties.

The peace treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Finland once again demonstrated what policy the Soviet Union pursued in relation to small countries. After routing the Finnish army, the Red Army could have occupied the whole of Finland and the U.S.S.R. could have demanded an indemnity to cover war expenditure; but the Soviet government showed its magnanimity by restricting itself to the minimum necessary to ensure the security of Leningrad and Murmansk.

On March 13, 1940, the Sixth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a decision to transfer the incorporated territory to the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and to transform the latter into a Union Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic. Thus, another Union Republic was added to the family of fraternal Union Republics. This was another step towards strengthening the multi-national socialist Soviet State.

**The Peaceful Settlement of the Soviet-Rumanian Conflict over Bessarabia.** Another extremely important victory for Stalin's peace policy was the peaceful settlement of the longstanding Soviet-Rumanian conflict over Bessarabia.

The Soviet government had never resigned itself to the forcible annexation of Bessarabia by Rumania, who occupied that country in 1918, when Soviet Russia was hard pressed by her foreign enemies. For over two decades the Moldavian people had been forcibly divided; on one side of the Dniester Soviet Moldavia flourished, but on the other side, Bessarabia, inhabited by Moldavians and Ukrainians, groaned under the heel of the Rumanian boyars. Rumania had converted Bes-

sarabia into her colony, and the country became poverty-stricken, ruined and economically still more backward than it had been before. Even official Rumanian figures showed that infantile mortality in the Bessarabian rural districts had reached horrifying dimensions as the result of poverty. The Rumanian landlords, capitalists and high government officials seized the land and factories and reduced the people of Bessarabia to slavery. Tens of thousands of the progressive people of Bessarabia were killed or tortured to death in the dungeons of the *Siguranța*, the Rumanian Secret Police. The working people of Bessarabia rose in revolt against the sanguinary oppression of the invaders; exceptionally big revolts took place in Khotin in 1919, and in Tatar Bunar in 1924. All through this period they fought continuously for their liberation from the yoke of the Rumanian boyars and for their reunion with the family of fraternal peoples of the U.S.S.R.

The same heavy yoke was borne by the people of Northern Bukovina, who had been forcibly divorced from their brothers, the Ukrainians. The land of Bukovina was seized by landlords, and the country was subjected to a reign of colonial oppression and exploitation. Time and again the people of Northern Bukovina rose in revolt against the Rumanian conquerors. In November 1918, a meeting of representatives from nearly every town and village in the country was held in Chernovitsi, and passed a resolution in favour of Bukovina joining Soviet Ukraine.

The Soviet Union came to the aid of the fraternal peoples of Bessarabia. On June 28, 1940, the Soviet government called upon the Rumanian government to restore Bessarabia to the Soviet Union and to cede to the Soviet Union the Northern part of Bukovina, which was inhabited by Ukrainians.

The Rumanian government accepted this proposal, and the 3,200,000 working people of Bessarabia and the 500,000 people of Northern Bukovina joined the family of Soviet peoples. The inhabitants of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina welcomed their liberator, the Red Army, with great rejoicing. The liberated peoples sent their delegates to the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. with the request that it should form a Union Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic and reunite in it the Moldavian people of Bessarabia with the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. On August 2, 1940, the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. granted this request and adopted a decision to form the Union Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. It also adopted a decision to incorporate Northern Bukovina and the three counties of Bessarabia that were inhabited by Ukrainians in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

**The Entry of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the U.S.S.R.**  
The change in the international situation and the consistent peace policy which the Soviet Union pursued gave a new aspect to the question of relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Baltic countries.

Lithuania, like the other Baltic countries, acquired national state independence as a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The Soviet government was the first to recognize the Lithuanian Republic. On July 12, 1920, a peace treaty was signed between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and Lithuania, by which a large part of the former Vilna Gubernia, with the city of Vilna, passed to Lithuania. Vilna became the capital of the Lithuanian Republic.

From the moment it was formed, the Lithuanian Republic became the object of the intrigues of the European governments and, in particular, of the Polish government, which openly aimed at seizing Lithuania. In 1920, despite the signing of a Polish-Lithuanian treaty, Poland seized Vilna and the Vilna Region. The League of Nations sanctioned this act of aggression. The Soviet government alone supported Lithuania's protest and refused to recognize the legality of Poland's action.

Soviet-Lithuanian relations were based on the mutual respect of the interests of the two countries. On September 28, 1926, a Soviet-Lithuanian pact of non-aggression and peaceful settlement of disputes was signed. In 1934, this pact was prolonged for another ten years.

The Soviet Union had always strongly supported the Lithuanian Republic. In 1927, it averted war between Poland and Lithuania which was being provoked by reactionary Polish circles. In 1937, Polish troops were again concentrated on the Lithuanian frontier, and it was only the intervention of the U.S.S.R. which prevented this conflict from developing into a war between Poland and Lithuania.

The policy of peace and friendship which the Soviet Union pursued met with the profound satisfaction and gratitude of the working people of Lithuania, but the foreign imperialists tried to convert Lithuania into a *place d'armes* for war against the U.S.S.R. During the Sejm elections in 1926, the reactionary nationalist party headed by Smetona sustained utter defeat. After this, Smetona, backed by the landlords, the militarists and the Catholic clergy, carried out a military *coup* and established his dictatorship. The working people of Lithuania were subjected to a reign of tyranny and oppression. Smetona extended the landlord system and imposed an unbearable burden of taxation upon the small peasants. The Lithuanian people rose against Smetona's bloody regime time and time again. After war broke out between Germany and Poland the Soviet government, in October 1939, anxious to ensure the security of the Soviet and Lithuanian frontiers, invited the Lithuanian government to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance, and without compensation transferred to Lithuania the city of Vilna and the Vilna Region which had been liberated by the Red Army. Instead, however, of honestly abiding by Lithuania's treaty obligations, the Smetona clique plotted new acts of provocation against the Soviet Union.

The government of the U.S.S.R. demanded that a change be made in the composition of the Lithuanian government, and that additional contingents of the Red Army be permitted to enter Lithuania for the purpose of guaranteeing the security of the U.S.S.R. and Lithuanian frontiers. The Lithuanian people welcomed the Red Army with great rejoicing. On July 14-15, 1940, a new government held democratic elections for the People's Sejm, and in these elections the candidates of the Lithuanian Labour Alliance polled 99 per cent of the votes. The People's Sejm unanimously resolved to proclaim Lithuania a Soviet Socialist Republic and sent a plenipotentiary delegation to the U.S.S.R. to request the Supreme Soviet to accept Soviet Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

The request of the representatives of Soviet Lithuania was granted, and on August 3, 1940, the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. accepted Lithuania into the Soviet Union as a Union Republic possessing equal rights with the others.

The same road was traversed by the Latvian bourgeois republic.

Soviet-Latvian relations were governed by the peace treaty of August 1920, which had also provided for the revival of economic relations between the two countries. But the bourgeois and kulak circles which dominated Latvia, instigated by the foreign imperialists, refused to sign a trade agreement with the U.S.S.R. It was not until the end of 1926, after the fall of the reactionary Ulmanis government, that more normal relations were established between the two countries by the conclusion of the Latvian-Soviet guarantee treaty of 1927 and the Latvian-Soviet trade agreement of June 1927. Subsequently Ulmanis, the leader of the so-called Peasant Union, carried out a counter-revolutionary *coup* and the last traces of bourgeois-democratic liberties were wiped out in Latvia. Notwithstanding the pact of mutual assistance that was concluded with the U.S.S.R. on October 5, 1939, the Latvian bourgeoisie continued its intrigues and, behind the back of the U.S.S.R., formed a military alliance of Baltic countries against U.S.S.R., utilizing for this purpose the "Baltic Entente" which had been formed as early as 1934.

Realizing that the ruling circles in Latvia were incapable of honestly carrying out the pact of mutual assistance the government of the U.S.S.R. called for a change in the composition of the Latvian government and demanded permission for Red Army units to enter Latvia.

The free elections to the Latvian Sejm that followed resulted in a sweeping victory for the candidates of the Bloc of the Working People of Latvia. The Sejm unanimously proclaimed Latvia a Soviet Republic. On the application of a plenipotentiary delegation which the Sejm sent to Moscow, the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on August 5, 1940, accepted Soviet Latvia into the Soviet Union as a Union Republic possessing equal rights with the others.

Estonian-Soviet relations were governed by the peace treaty signed in the beginning of 1920, which caused the first breach in the Entente's blockade of the U.S.S.R. The Estonian bourgeoisie, however, had connections with countries that were hostile to the U.S.S.R., and on their instigation it more than once supported anti-Soviet adventures. In May 1922, the Estonian authorities in Reval executed the Estonian popular hero Victor Kingisepp, a member of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and even sent a protest to the government of the U.S.S.R. for changing the name of the town of Yambur, near the Estonian frontier, to that of Kingisepp.

In 1924, the workers of Reval heroically rose in revolt against the reign of White terror in Estonia; the Estonian government used this as a pretext for launching another anti-Soviet campaign.

In 1925, the Estonian bourgeoisie, on the direct orders of the foreign imperialists, refused to conclude a trade agreement and guarantee treaty with the U.S.S.R. The Estonian government sabotaged the pact of mutual assistance that was concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Estonia on September 28, 1939. The Estonian governing clique entered into a military alliance with the other Baltic countries and began to prepare for war against the U.S.S.R. The vigilance of the Soviet government, however, frustrated these designs.

On June 21, 1940, the working people of Estonia swept away the warmongers and put a people's government in power. The elections to the Estonian State Duma that took place on July 14-15 resulted in a sweeping victory for the democratic elements. At the very first meeting of the Duma a resolution was unanimously adopted to proclaim Estonia a Soviet Republic and to affiliate the republic to the U.S.S.R.

At its meeting on August 6, 1940, the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet heard the statement of the plenipotentiary delegation from the Estonian Soviet Republic and unanimously accepted the republic into the Soviet Union as a Union Republic possessing equal rights with the others.

## *Chapter XVII*

# THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE

**Hitler Germany's Perfidious Attack upon the U.S.S.R.** While carrying out the immense tasks of the Third Stalin Five-Year Plan and firmly and undeviatingly pursuing a peace policy, the Soviet government did not for a moment lose sight of the possibility of the imperialists making another attack upon our country. When fascist Germany began openly to unleash war in Europe, Comrade Stalin

called upon the people of the Soviet Union to put themselves in a state of mobilization and preparedness. As early as February 1938, in his reply to the letter of the Young Communist Leaguer Ivanov, he wrote: "Indeed, it would be ridiculous and stupid to close our eyes to the fact of the capitalist encirclement and to think that our external enemies, the fascists, for example, will not, if the opportunity arises, make an attempt at a military attack upon the U.S.S.R."

Comrade Stalin strongly urged the necessity of strengthening the defensive capacity of our country. He wrote: "Our Red Army, Red Navy, Red Air Fleet, and the Aviation and Chemical Society must be increased and strengthened to the utmost.

"The whole of our people must be kept in a state of mobilization and preparedness in face of the danger of a military attack, so that no 'accident' and no tricks on the part of our external enemies may take us by surprise. . . ."

Comrade Stalin's warnings put the Soviet people on the alert and prompted them more vigilantly to watch the intrigues of their enemies and in every way to strengthen the Red Army.

The Soviet people understood that the German fascists, headed by Hitler, were aiming to unleash another sanguinary war with the object of winning world domination. Hitler had proclaimed the Germans the "superior race" and all other peoples as lower and inferior races. The Hitlerites particularly hated the Slavonic peoples, and primarily the great Russian people, who had fought the German aggressors more than once in the course of their history. The Hitlerites intended, after they had achieved victory in the World War, to drive a large section of the Slavs out of Europe beyond the Urals and totally annihilate the other section.

The Hitlerites dreamed of utilizing the immense resources of the Land of Soviets—oil, coal and food—for the purpose of carrying out their further plans of conquest. Hitler counted on defeating the Soviet Union in a short space of time and then on utilizing all his forces for the purpose of subjugating the rest of the world.

The Hitlerites based their designs on the plan for an attack upon, and the lightning defeat of, Russia drawn up by General Hoffmann during the First World War. This plan provided for the concentration of vast armies on the Western frontiers of our country, the seizure of its vital centres within a few weeks and for a rapid march into the interior right up to the Urals. Subsequently, this plan was supplemented and endorsed by the Hitler High Command who called it the "Barbarossa plan."

On the night of June 21-22, 1941, Hitler's army suddenly and perfidiously attacked the U.S.S.R. in spite of the pact of non-aggression which had been signed between Germany and the U.S.S.R. Hit-

ler expected to win the war in a matter of two or three months. He based his calculations on the considerable numerical superiority of the German army, which had long been mobilized, was well armed and had already gained war experience. Hitler also calculated that the Soviet rear would prove unstable; he believed that the Soviet system would break down as a result of military reverses, that conflicts would break out between the workers and the peasants, and that national strife would break out among the peoples of the Soviet Union.

The monstrous war machine of the Hitler imperialists began its devastating drive in the Baltic countries, Byelorussia and the Ukraine, and threatened the vital centres of the Land of Soviets.

### **The U.S.S.R.'s War Against Germany, a War of Liberation.**

The Land of Soviets was in mortal peril, and in his radio address of July 3, 1941, Comrade Stalin warned the Soviet people of this. He called upon them to abandon the complacency and carelessness of peacetime, to rise up in defence of their motherland and the gains of the October Revolution, and to wage a patriotic war against the fascist invaders. In this historic address, Comrade Stalin clearly defined the character of the Great Patriotic War which the Soviet Union was waging as a just war for liberation. On the other hand he showed that Hitler Germany, which had launched a perfidious and predatory attack upon our country, was waging an unjust war of conquest. He exposed the predatory designs of the Hitlerites and warned that a victory for Germany would mean enslavement and oppression for the peoples of the U.S.S.R. "The enemy is cruel and implacable," he said. "He is out to seize our lands which have been watered by the sweat of our brow, to seize our grain and oil which have been obtained by the labour of our hands. He is out to restore the rule of the landlords, to restore tsarism, to destroy the national culture and the national existence as states of the Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Uzbeks, Tatars, Moldavians, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbaijanians and the other free peoples of the Soviet Union, to Germanize them, to convert them into the slaves of German princes and barons. Thus, the issue is one of life and death for the Soviet State, of life and death for the peoples of the U.S.S.R., of whether the peoples of the Soviet Union shall be free or fall into slavery" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 13).

Comrade Stalin pointed out that the war against Hitler Germany must not be regarded as an ordinary war. It was not only a war between two armies, he said; it was a nation-wide patriotic war against the fascist oppressors, the object of which was not only to remove the danger that was hovering over our country, but also to help all the peoples of Europe who were groaning under the yoke of German fascism.



Comrade Stalin's speech was an example of scientific foresight and at the same time a program for the struggle of the Soviet people against Hitler Germany. In response to Comrade Stalin's call, all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. rose up to defend the honour, freedom and independence of their motherland.

**Collapse of the Fascists' Plan for a Blitzkrieg.** The very first months of the war revealed the total unsoundness of the plans of the fascists, of their calculations on the Soviet armies suffering lightning-like defeat, and on the Soviet rear being an unstable one. The enemy's temporary advantages—suddenness of attack, numerical superiority in tanks, aircraft and automatic weapons and the absence of a second front in Europe—enabled him to achieve certain tactical and operative successes.

But in the course of the war the armed forces of the Soviet Union expanded and became strong. The Soviet Army fought stubbornly for every inch of Soviet soil. The Soviet Supreme Command countered the enemy's onslaughts with Stalin's strategy and tactics of active defence. Wearing down the enemy and sapping his manpower, the Soviet Army strove to liquidate the enemy's temporary advantages in the shortest possible time. The men of the Soviet Army self-sacrificingly defended our Soviet towns and villages to the last. The battle of Smolensk, for example, lasted nearly thirty days. The German tank division which broke into Smolensk was annihilated in the streets of the city. Tens of thousands of German soldiers were wiped out in the vicinity of Smolensk.

The defence of Odessa was even more prolonged and stubborn, lasting nearly seventy days. The Germans and Rumanians hurled eighteen divisions against this city, while the defenders had at their command only four infantry divisions and small units of sailors and people's volunteers. Nevertheless, the Germans failed to take the city by storm; it was abandoned by the Soviet troops for strategic reasons.

Stubborn fighting proceeded along the whole frontier from the Arctic Sea to the Black Sea. Employing Stalin's tactics of active defence, the Soviet Army stubbornly held at bay the mighty onslaught of Hitler's hordes. Hitler's army sustained immense losses.

The calculations of the Hitlerites on being able to inflict lightning-like defeat on the Soviet Union proved baseless.

**The Defeat of the Germans Near Moscow.** Exceptionally fierce was the enemy's onslaught on Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union. On October 2, 1941, the German High Command launched a general offensive with the object of surrounding and seizing Moscow. The Germans tried to capture Moscow by an enormous "pincer" movement *via* Rzhev-Kalinin from the North and Orel-Tula from the South. Hitler was so confident that this plan would succeed that he gave orders for

a parade of German troops to be held on the Red Square on November 7. The Soviet Army, however, frustrated this insane plan of the Hitlerites.

At the very outset of the war a State Committee for Defence, headed by Comrade Stalin, was set up. Under the direction of this Committee the entire country began actively to put itself on a war footing. A general mobilization and training of replenishments for the Soviet Army was undertaken. The armament industry was expanded. Whole plants were transported from the regions threatened by invasion eastwards to Siberia, the Urals and Central Asia. The inhabitants of Moscow formed people's volunteer units to repel the enemy. Over 120,000 Moscow volunteers were formed into new divisions which constituted a powerful barrier against the enemy's advance upon the capital. Within a short space of time tens of thousands of Moscow citizens encircled the city with strong defence lines. A state of siege was proclaimed in Moscow. The defence of the capital was directed by Comrade Stalin in person.

On November 6, 1941, at the moment when the enemy was fighting his way towards Moscow, Comrade Stalin delivered an address at a meeting of the Moscow Soviet on the occasion of the 24th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In his speech he enumerated the causes of the Soviet Army's temporary reverses, showed how the evil designs of the enemy had collapsed and drew the conclusion that the defeat of the German imperialists and their armies was inevitable. He depicted the prospects of the war and pointed to the three main factors which would lead to the inevitable defeat of the Hitlerite imperialists. The first factor, he said, was the instability of the European rear of imperialist Germany, against whom all the peoples of Europe enslaved by the Germans would inevitably rise. The second factor was the instability of the German rear itself, which would be more and more shaken as Hitler's army sustained defeat. The third factor was the establishment and strengthening of the fighting coalition of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the United States against the German fascist imperialists.

Taking all these factors into account, Comrade Stalin forecast an inevitable turn in the whole course of the war in favour of the Soviet Union and its Allies.

Next day, November 7, 1941, Comrade Stalin spoke at the Soviet Army parade on the Red Square. Recalling the fighting traditions of the great ancestors of the Russian people, he called upon the men and commanders of the Soviet Army and the Soviet Navy to follow their example in this heroic struggle for the freedom and independence of our Soviet Motherland. He said: "Let the heroic images of our great forebears—Alexander Nevsky, Dimitri Donskoi, Kuzma Minin, Dimitri Pozharsky, Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov—inspire you

in this war! May you be inspired by the victorious banner of the great Lenin!" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 41.)

These historic utterances of Comrade Stalin's inspired the Soviet Army and the entire Soviet people to perform new heroic deeds. The men of the Soviet Army fought the enemy at the approaches to Moscow with unprecedented courage. The Guards Division commanded by General Panfilov in particular covered itself with glory. In a battle lasting over four hours, twenty-eight guardsmen of this division, led by Political Instructor Klochkov, held at bay fifty powerful German tanks on an important line in the defences of Moscow. Almost all of these heroes were killed in this unequal battle, but the enemy was halted and, with the arrival of reinforcements, hurled back.

Thousands of Moscow volunteers fought at the approaches to the city side by side with fighters from different Soviet nationalities. The entire Soviet people defended Moscow—the heart of the Soviet Union.

In October 1941, as many as thirty-five German divisions were almost wiped out by the heroic defenders of Moscow. The Germans' October offensive against the Soviet capital failed.

After this Hitler called upon his troops to strike another decisive blow. In November, fifty-one divisions were hurled against Moscow, among them being thirteen tank and motorized-infantry divisions. The Germans tried to capture Moscow by employing new "pincers" and "wedges." But the Soviet Army, now steeled in battle, put up a staunch resistance and wore the enemy out by means of powerful counter-strokes. Meanwhile, the Supreme Command of the Soviet Army made preparations for a decisive offensive. On December 6, 1941, Comrade Stalin issued the order for the offensive to be launched, and the Soviet Army routed the Germans near Moscow within forty days. During this period the Soviet Army captured or destroyed about 1,500 enemy tanks and large quantities of artillery and other weapons. The Germans sustained heavy losses in manpower. As a result of the Soviet Army's offensive operations, the enemy was hurled back from the capital, in some places as much as 400 kilometres.

The defeat of the Germans near Moscow was the decisive event in the first year of the war and the first important defeat of the Germans in the Second World War. It revealed that the Soviet Army was a powerful fighting force that was capable not only of withstanding the onslaught of the German fascist troops, but also of defeating them in open battle. The Soviet Army thus dispelled the myth that had gained currency in Europe to the effect that Hitler's army was invincible. The defeat of the Germans near Moscow inspired both the Soviet people who had temporarily fallen under the yoke of the German



Supreme Commander-in-Chief,  
Generalissimo of the Soviet Union,  
JOSEPH VISSARIONOVICH STALIN

invaders, and all the peoples of Europe whom the Hitlerites had enslaved, to rise up and fight the aggressors.

Simultaneously with the defeat they sustained near Moscow the Germans sustained defeat in the North—in the region of Tikhvin—and in the South—in the region of Rostov-on-Don. This showed what a formidable fighting force the Soviet Army had grown into. By February 23, 1942, Soviet Army Day, the whole of the Moscow and Tula Regions, a considerable part of the Kalinin Region, and parts of the Leningrad and Smolensk Regions, had been cleared of the enemy. During the entire winter campaign of 1941-1942, the Soviet Army liberated over sixty towns and 11,000 inhabited centres.

But the German war machine was not yet demolished. It was still formidable, and was employed exclusively on the Soviet Front. In 1941 the Soviet Union actually fought Germany single-handed, but at that time an anti-Hitler coalition of the Great Powers—the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the U.S.A.—was already being formed. In July 1941, the governments of the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain signed an agreement for joint operations in the war against Hitler Germany. In 1942, Great Britain and the Soviet Union concluded a treaty of alliance in the war against Germany and her confederates in Europe and of co-operation and mutual assistance after the war. This treaty was signed for twenty years. The United States also concluded a military agreement with the Soviet Union.

But the conclusion of these treaties did not do away with the anti-Soviet trends in these countries. The reactionary elements asserted that the unity among the Great Powers was a temporary phenomenon, and that only the war had imposed it on them.

The German imperialists had always dreaded a war on two fronts. All their strategy and tactics were designed to beat their enemies one by one, but they were not always able to do this. During the First World War Germany fought against Great Britain and France in the West, and against Russia in the East. Of the 220 divisions which the Germans had at their command in 1914-1918, eighty-five divisions (and counting the forces of Germany's allies, 127 divisions) fought on the Russian Front. The rest of the divisions at the command of Germany and her allies were on the Western Front. During the Second World War Hitler Germany waged war for a long time mainly on the Eastern Front, utilizing her main forces to fight the Soviet Union. Of the 256 divisions which the Germans had at their command in 1941-1942 no less than 179 operated against the U.S.S.R. The Soviet Army was obliged to repel the mighty onslaught of Hitler's armies singlehanded.

The intrigues and machinations of the reactionaries headed by Prime Minister Churchill and his adherents in Great Britain and the U.S.A. were aimed at weakening the Soviet Union in every way

in its struggle against Hitler Germany, and at dragging out, at all costs, the military operations in progress on the Soviet-German Front.

Taking advantage of the absence of a second front, the Hitlerites, in the beginning of May 1942, launched another offensive. Scores of German divisions were withdrawn from the Western Front and brought into action on the Soviet-German Front. After capturing Kerch, the Hitlerites resumed the assault on Sevastopol. The defence of Sevastopol lasted 250 days. The sailors of the Black Sea Fleet defended the city with unprecedented valour.

When the battle of Sevastopol was at its height, Comrade Stalin sent greetings to its defenders in which he said: "The self-sacrificing struggle waged by the defenders of Sevastopol sets an example of heroism to the entire Red Army and the Soviet people."

**The Battle of Stalingrad.** In the summer of 1942, the Hitlerites, having established a considerable numerical superiority of forces on the southwestern direction of the Soviet-German Front, achieved important tactical successes and reached the region of Voronezh, Stalingrad and Novorossiisk. Hitler still regarded as his main objective the capture of Moscow, but this time his intention was to outflank the capital on the east and cut it off from the rear areas of the Volga and the Urals. Especial importance in Hitler's new plans was attached to the capture of Stalingrad, which was of enormous strategical significance. Situated at the junction of vital water and railway communications, it linked the centres of the country with the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, with Astrakhan and Baku and with the Volga area and the Eastern Regions of the U.S.S.R. Stalingrad was also a vital arsenal which supplied the Soviet Army with tanks and other weapons.

The Hitler High Command hurled against Stalingrad their Sixth Army, under the command of General von Paulus, who had gained fame by his victories in Europe. Over 1,500 guns shelled the city from every side. Many thousands of aeroplanes dropped high-explosive and incendiary bombs on it every day.

Stalingrad staunchly and bravely repelled the vicious onslaughts of the enemy. The workers at the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, and at the other plants in the city, continued to work under enemy fire, supplying the city's defenders with tanks and ammunition. An active part in the defence of Stalingrad was played by heroes of the Civil War who had taken part in the valiant defence of Tsaritsyn (as Stalingrad was then called) under the personal direction of Comrade Stalin.

The entire country went to the aid of Stalingrad. Everybody was aware that the outcome of the battle of Stalingrad would determine the fate of our motherland. The heroic defence of the city enabled the Supreme Command of the Soviet Army to muster reserves and

to draw up and put into operation a plan for the defeat of the Germans at Stalingrad.

At dawn on November 19, 1942, after terrific artillery preparation, the Soviet Army forces of three fronts launched an offensive and broke through the enemy's defences. After routing the enemy's flanks the Soviet Army surrounded the picked German units and proceeded to annihilate them. By the beginning of February 1943, two German armies, numbering 330,000 men, ceased to exist. Nearly a third of this force, headed by General von Paulus, was taken prisoner.

The Stalingrad operation, which was carried out in conformity with plans which had been drawn up by Comrade Stalin, was unprecedented in world history both in scale of operations and skilful generalship. This was the first time in the history of war that such a vast mass of enemy troops was surrounded and annihilated. In an address he delivered on November 6, 1943, Comrade Stalin appraised the battle of Stalingrad in the following words: "To form an idea of the slaughter on the battlefield of Stalingrad, which was on a scale unprecedented in history, one should know that after the battle of Stalingrad 147,200 dead German men and officers and 46,700 Soviet men and officers were picked up and buried. Stalingrad marked the beginning of the decline of the German fascist army. It is common knowledge that the Germans never recovered from the Stalingrad slaughter" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 116).

The victory at Stalingrad brought about a radical turn in the whole course of the Great Patriotic War. The heroic defence of Sevastopol and Odessa, the defeat of the Germans near Moscow, the stubborn battles fought near Leningrad, and the greatest battle in history fought at the walls of Stalingrad, laid a firm foundation for victory over the German fascist armies.

**The Radical Turn in the Course of the War.** In the winter of 1942-1943, the Soviet Army, despite difficult conditions, was on the offensive on a front of 1,500 kilometres, and at nearly every point struck the fascist army blow after blow. The enemy troops were hurled back great distances from Vladikavkaz, Stalingrad and Voronezh.

The relation of forces on the Soviet-German Front had now changed. During the twenty months of the war the Soviet Army, in the course of defensive and offensive battles, had put out of action several millions of Hitlerite soldiers and officers, including the Rumanian, Italian and Hungarian armies, flung by Hitler over to the Soviet-German Front, who were utterly routed. Thus, the German fascist army lost the advantage it had possessed in conducting large-scale military operations. After acquiring experience in modern warfare the Soviet Army became a fully seasoned army which had mastered the tactics of manoeuvring, surrounding and annihilating the enemy's manpower.

In the spring of 1943, a temporary lull in military operations set in. Both sides made preparations for decisive battles. The Hitlerites mustered forces for another big offensive. In Germany "total" mobilization was proclaimed, and the number of German divisions on the Soviet-German Front was brought up to 257. The industry of occupied Europe worked at top speed manufacturing weapons for the German army.

At the beginning of the summer of 1943, the Germans launched an offensive against the salient that had been formed at Kursk as a result of the Soviet Army's offensive during the preceding winter in the region of the Orel-Kursk-Belgorod Railway. The Germans' plan was to strike from two directions—from their Orel *place d'armes* in the North, and the region of Belgorod in the South—surround and annihilate the Soviet troops that were concentrated inside the Kursk salient, and then commence a drive against Moscow. To carry out this plan, the Germans concentrated on a relatively short front seventeen tank and eighteen infantry divisions and a vast number of aircraft. Never before had such a huge quantity of the weapons of war been brought into action as in the battle of Kursk. The density of armaments amounted to 100 to 150 tanks and 100 to 200 guns per kilometre. Notwithstanding this, the Germans failed to pierce the Soviet Front. The Soviet Army had organized a deeply echeloned defence and the Soviet artillery exterminated the enemy's "Tigers" and "Ferdinands."

After wearing down the main forces of the German fascist army and bleeding them white, the Soviet Army undertook the offensive in its turn. On August 5, 1943, exactly a month after the Germans had launched their offensive, the Soviet Army captured Orel and Belgorod, thus liquidating the enemy's fortified bridgehead at Orel, the most powerful and dangerous one for our country at that time, and which the Hitlerite High Command had anticipated using for another offensive against Moscow.

The battles of Kursk, Orel and Belgorod marked the opening of the Red Army's powerful summer offensive. The Soviet troops made a drive for Kharkov, and on August 23, 1943, the city was liberated from the German invaders. At the same time operations were commenced for the liberation of the Donetz Basin. On September 8, 1943, Stalino was liberated as the result of an impetuous assault. The German High Command attempted to halt the advance of the Soviet troops at the water's edge at the River Desna, and particularly at the River Dnieper; but the Soviet Army successfully forced the Desna, and later the upper reaches of the Dnieper, and on September 25, 1943, liberated Smolensk, a most important German strategic centre of defence in the western direction.

The Soviet Army's summer offensive culminated in stubborn



fighting for the Dnieper. The German High Command concentrated vast forces for the defence of their powerful Dnieper defence line. They occupied the well-fortified hilly right bank of the river, blew up all the bridges, and destroyed everything that could be used for crossing the river; they were convinced that the broad and deep Dnieper, the middle and southern reaches of which were as much as 600 metres wide, could not be forced. But to the enemy's surprise the Soviet troops did begin to cross the river at a number of points. The crossing proceeded not on pontoon bridges, but on rafts and everything else at hand that could float. In this crossing the Soviet Army received enormous assistance from the Ukrainian partisans who had prepared rafts and improvised boats and on these rowed the Soviet Army men across to the right bank. In a number of places the partisans had dislodged the Germans from important strategical points and held them until the Soviet Army arrived.

After capturing several important bridgeheads on the right bank of the Dnieper, the Soviet Army began an offensive with the object of liberating Kiev. On November 6, 1943, after stubborn fighting, Kiev was captured by assault. In liberating Kiev the Soviet troops were assisted by the Czechoslovak Brigade which had been formed in Russia.

After this, in the course of one week, the Soviet Army advanced 130 kilometres beyond Kiev. Developing the offensive, the troops under the command of General Vatutin captured Zhitomir on December 31. At this time the troops on the Byelorussian Front liberated Gomel and thereby made a beginning in liberating the whole of Byelorussia.

The Soviet Army's drive through the Ukraine and Byelorussia was supported by operations on all the other fronts from Finland to the Crimea.

The Soviet Army's offensive operations in the summer of 1943 created a critical situation for Hitler's army and upset all the Germans' expectations of being able successfully to wage a long-drawn-out defensive war on the Soviet-German Front.

The year 1943 marked a radical turn in the course of the war. Notwithstanding the fact that the Soviet Army still bore the whole brunt of the fighting against the German fascist hordes, it achieved a brilliant victory over them.

**The Wholesale Expulsion of the German Fascist Invaders.** The fourth year of the war proved to be a year of decisive victory for the Soviet Army. In the beginning of 1944, the Leningrad group of German troops was routed. The Soviet Army forces which were defending Leningrad had heroically held the Germans at bay for two years. In the autumn of 1941, the fascists attempted to capture Leningrad by assault, but when this attempt failed they, with the assistance

of the Finns, laid siege to the city. Completely blockaded, the inhabitants of Leningrad suffered hunger and cold. Day after day the Germans battered the residential quarters from the heavy long-range guns with which they had encircled the city. But neither starvation, artillery bombardment, nor daily bombing from the air could crush the heroic spirit of the defenders of the city of Lenin.

In January 1943, the Soviet troops on the Leningrad and Volkhov Fronts broke through the blockade. The food situation in the heroic city considerably improved. But the Germans, building several belts of strong fortifications around the city, continued the siege. On January 14, 1944, after thorough preparation, the troops on the Leningrad Front launched a determined offensive with the object of completely liberating Leningrad. The Germans were hurled into Estonia. The Soviet Army was thus enabled to commence a drive in the Baltic Regions and in Finland.

At the end of January 1944, the Soviet Army undertook an offensive with the object of liberating Ukrainian territory west of the Dnieper. In the Korsun-Shevchenkivsky Region, Soviet troops surrounded and wiped out ten divisions and one brigade of the enemy. Early in the spring of 1944, in spite of the spring thaw and the thick layer of sticky mud that covered the roads, the Soviet Army launched an offensive with the object of completely liberating the Ukraine west of the Dnieper. Pursuing the retreating Germans the Soviet Army surrounded large and small enemy forces and wiped them out. The enemy lost a great deal of his manpower and materiel in this way.

After forcing the Dniester, the Soviet Army entered Moldavia, and on March 26, 1944, after a swift drive, reached the river Pruth, the frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Rumania. In the beginning of April the Soviet troops defeated the Germans in the foothills of the Carpathians and reached the frontier between the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia. Thus, the war was carried across the frontiers of our country.

After routing the German troops in Right-Bank Ukraine, the Soviet Army proceeded to liberate the Crimea. The Germans had tried to keep the Crimea as a base for another drive into the Kuban Region; moreover, their occupation of the Crimea imperiled the existence of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet. The Hitlerites had strongly fortified Persekop, the gate to the Crimea, and had transformed the region of Sevastopol into a powerful fortress.

The fighting to liberate the Crimea began on April 8, 1944. After forcing the Sivash Shallows, the Soviet Army drove into the interior of the Crimea. The remnants of the defeated German fascist troops fortified themselves in Sevastopol. On May 7, the Soviet Army launched an assault upon the Sevastopol fortress, and after three days of fierce fighting Sevastopol was liberated. The liberation of the Crimea changed

the whole situation in the Black Sea and brought the Soviet Army near to the Balkans.

In the summer of 1944, the liberation of the Karelo-Finnish Republic began. On June 19, 1944, after smashing the Finnish defences in the centre of the Mannerheim Line, the Soviet Army captured Vyborg. A week later it cleared the Murmansk Railway of enemy forces and liberated Petrozavodsk, the capital of the Karelo-Finnish Republic. Fascist Germany's Finnish allies found themselves faced with disaster. Finland sued for peace and on September 19, 1944, signed an armistice treaty. Thus, Hitler Germany lost her faithful ally on the northern sector of the Soviet Front.

During these same summer months decisive battles were fought for the complete expulsion of the Germans from Byelorussia and Lithuania. The chief objective of the offensive in Byelorussia was to isolate the main forces of the German central group concentrated east of Minsk. Near Minsk the troops of the three Byelorussian Fronts enclosed the Germans in an iron ring. In the morning of July 3, Minsk was liberated. About 60,000 German soldiers and officers were taken prisoner in Byelorussia, and these were sent *via* Moscow to prisoner-of-war camps.

The Soviet troops continued their triumphant drive westward.

On July 13, Vilna, the capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic, was liberated. The German garrison in the city was wiped out. The liberation of the whole of Soviet Byelorussia and of part of Soviet Lithuania enabled the Soviet Army to reach the frontier between the Soviet Union and East Prussia.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Army was continuing its offensive in the south, in Bessarabia. On August 23, Kishinev, the capital of the Moldavian Republic, was liberated. The German and Rumanian troops tried to make a stand in the region of Jassi, but here a large group of them was encircled and completely wiped out. The swift drive begun by the Soviet Army culminated on August 30, 1944, in its entry into Bucharest, the capital of Rumania. Unable to continue the war any further, Rumania was obliged to capitulate. The new Rumanian government that was formed signed an armistice with the U.S.S.R. and declared war on Germany.

On September 5, the Soviet government sent the government of Bulgaria a note stating that since Bulgaria was in fact fighting the Soviet Union, the latter would regard herself at war with Bulgaria. The Bulgarian people, however, having no desire to be at war with the Soviet Union, on September 9 overthrew the fascist government and set up a democratic government, which declared war on Germany.

Thus, as a result of the victories which the Soviet Army had achieved, Germany lost her most important allies. This still further

aggravated the military, economic and political situation for fascist Germany.

**The Anti-Hitler Coalition is Strengthened.** Faced with disaster, Hitler Germany exerted all efforts to disrupt the united front of the Allies who were fighting against her. After the "blitzkrieg" failed the Hitlerites based all their strategy on the prolongation of the war and on preventing the cementation of the alliance and friendship between the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and the United States. The vital interests of all the freedom-loving peoples, however, called for the speedy and complete defeat of the armed forces of fascist Germany and of her vassals.

For the purpose of discussing concrete measures to bring about the speedy termination of the war a conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union was held in Moscow in October 1943. This Moscow Conference drew up the measures necessary for shortening the war against Germany and her allies, and formulated the basic principles upon which a system of international co-operation and security was to be established. The conference expressed itself in favour of restoring the freedom and independence of Austria, and stressed the necessity of creating a democratic government in Italy. It also adopted a declaration to the effect that the Hitlerites would be called to book for the atrocities they had committed. This declaration was published over the signatures of Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill.

A month later, in November 1943, the leaders of the Three Powers—J. V. Stalin, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, and Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain—met in Teheran. The Teheran Conference adopted a "Declaration of the Three Powers" which expressed unanimous determination to crush Hitler Germany and ensure peace and security for the peoples. The leaders of the Three Powers who signed this declaration stated: "We express our determination that our nations shall work together in war and in the peace that will follow." As regards the Allies' war plans, the declaration emphasized their firm determination to strike Hitler Germany the final blow and demolish her armed forces on land, on sea, and in the air. The leaders of the Allied Powers reached complete agreement on the scope and timing of the operations to be undertaken against Hitler Germany.

In the succeeding period, however, Churchill, bent on satisfying the mercenary interests of British imperialism, resorted to all sorts of devices to hold up the opening of the second front, and to inflict as much damage as possible on our state.

The Soviet Army's victories were a decisive factor in ensuring the Allies' military successes in North Africa and in Italy; and the

fact that the Germans' main strategical reserves had been withdrawn from the West and that the finest German divisions had been annihilated on the Soviet-German Front, enabled the Allies successfully to develop large-scale offensive operations in Europe.

The second front was opened only when it became clear that the Soviet Union was in a position, unaided by the Allies and with its own forces, to occupy the whole of Germany and to liberate the peoples of Europe. On June 6, 1944, Allied troops landed in northern France. The second front tied down nearly seventy-five of Hitler's divisions, and, to some degree, helped the Soviet Army to carry out its task of utterly defeating the German troops. However, the main burden of the war continued, as heretofore, to be borne by the Soviet Army, which tied down over 200 divisions. The fourth year of the war proved to be a year of decisive victories over the German troops achieved by the Soviet armies and the armies of our Allies.

**The Liberation of the Peoples of Europe.** The course of the war totally upset all the plans and calculations of the Hitler imperialists in the sphere of foreign policy. The predatory Hitler bloc collapsed. The peoples of Europe who had been enslaved by the Germans intensified their resistance, for their hatred of the fascist invaders grew the longer the German occupation lasted. In all the countries they had conquered the fascists had established their so-called "new order," which, in fact, was only a replica of the old order of slavery or serfdom. The Germans conquered and enslaved advanced European nations like the French, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Norwegians, Dutch, Belgians, Serbians and others, and everywhere the Hitler party, the party of the most rapacious and predatory imperialists in the world, applied their cannibal race theory. In all the countries they subjugated the Germans introduced the methods of slavery and serfdom, covered Europe with gallows, and destroyed the finest treasures of the culture of all nations.

The German fascists treated the inhabitants of the Soviet regions they had occupied with exceptional ferocity and cruelty. The frightful atrocities which the German fascists perpetrated were systematically reported by the Soviet Information Bureau and also by the Extraordinary Commission which the Soviet government set up to collect information about them. But during the war years the atrocities were only partly brought to the light of day. When the Germans were defeated, the whole world received convincing proof of the ghastly crimes committed by the fascist monsters. The Nuremberg trial also yielded a shocking picture of the sufferings endured by Soviet people in the occupied areas, subjected, as they were, to torture and insult of every kind.

The Hitler authorities condemned Soviet people to death for the slightest resistance or opposition. The German butchers shot, burned

to death, hanged and tortured Soviet people in thousands. The collective farms in the occupied regions were broken up and the land was given to German landlords and kulaks. The collective farmers, driven off their land, were compelled to work for the new landlords, or else were driven off to Germany to work like galley slaves. Millions perished as a result of the unbearable toil which the German conquerors forced upon them. The Germans destroyed the finest monuments of Russian national culture. They wrecked the estate of the great Russian author Leo Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana, the home of the great Russian composer Chaikovsky in Klin, and the house of the famous Russian author Chekhov in Taganrog, all of which had been converted into museums. They also defiled great relics connected with the name of Pushkin, and so on.

As early as 1941, Comrade Stalin had said that the "new order" in Europe was a volcano which was ready to erupt at any moment. The enslaved peoples of Europe were only waiting for the opportunity to rise up against their enslavers. It was the liberating mission of the Soviet Army to help the peoples of Europe in their struggle to free themselves from Hitler tyranny. As the Soviet Army neared the frontiers of the U.S.S.R., the peoples of all the countries that were occupied by the Germans rose to wage a general struggle for liberation against the invaders.

The Soviet Army came to their aid. As soon as it crossed the Rumanian-Yugoslav frontier, it rendered substantial assistance to the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia, who had been heroically fighting the Germans from the very first day the latter invaded their country. On October 20, 1944, the Soviet Army, jointly with the People's Liberation Army liberated Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia. In the beginning of 1945, the Soviet Army helped our ally Poland to liberate a number of important Polish towns, and on January 14, 1945, Soviet troops, in conjunction with the First Polish Army, liberated Warsaw, the long-suffering capital of the Polish Republic. The Soviet Army also rendered considerable assistance to the freedom-loving peoples of Czechoslovakia who had been resisting the German invaders all the time. Thus, the Soviet Army carried out its liberating mission in relation to all the peoples of Europe and helped them to throw off the yoke of the German tyrants.

**The Heroic Struggle Waged by the Soviet Partisans.** An extremely important part in the war against the Hitler robbers was played by the patriotic Soviet partisans who operated in all the Soviet regions that were temporarily occupied by the Germans. In the radio address he delivered on July 3, 1941, Comrade Stalin called upon all the Soviet people in the occupied regions to make conditions "unbearable for the enemy and all his accomplices." "They must be hounded and annihilated at every step, and all their measures must be frustrated,"

he said (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, p. 15).

Thousands and hundreds of thousands of Soviet patriots responded to Comrade Stalin's call. Men and women of all ages and professions withdrew to the forests where they joined the partisan units. The Soviet people will never forget the name of one of the first women-partisans, the Moscow high-school girl, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya. In 1941, Zoya voluntarily joined a partisan unit and bravely fought against the Hitlerites. During one of the partisan operations she was taken prisoner. She was subjected to frightful torture, but nothing could break the heroic spirit of this patriotic Soviet girl. Failing to compel the young heroine to give them any information, the Hitlerites decided to hang her in public. As the noose was being put round her neck she turned to the peasants who had been driven to the scene of the execution and made a passionate appeal to them to exterminate the fascists. "Don't be afraid," she said. "Stalin is with us. Stalin will come!"

The same staunchness and devotion to his country was displayed by the sixteen-year-old schoolboy and member of the Young Communist League, Shura Chekalin. Shura voluntarily joined an Extermination Battalion. One day, while a battle was in progress, he found himself cut off in the enemy's rear. He succeeded, however, in establishing contact with a partisan unit and served in it actively as a scout. Eventually he was caught by the Germans who, after subjecting him to inhuman torture, took him out to be hanged. Under the gallows the heroic lad proudly faced the Germans and said: "You can't hang us all! We are far too many for you!" The young patriot went to his death singing the "International."

Outstanding among the popular heroes, the organizers and leaders of the partisan movement, were the Bolsheviks who in peacetime had been managers of collective farms and factories, Soviet administrators or leaders of Party organizations.

The "avengers of the people" as these heroic partisans were called, struck at the enemy's most vulnerable points. They wrecked factories and offices in the enemy's rear, cut the Germans' communications, attacked and wiped out supply columns, struck at enemy reserves and blew up bridges. In this extensive war of liberation the partisans enlisted the masses of the people who were groaning under the heel of the German invaders. The forests in which the partisans operated became a nightmare to the Germans. The German Command repeatedly sent punitive detachments to "comb" the woods and wipe out the partisans, but through their scouts the partisans learned of the movements of these punitive detachments and took counter-measures against them. The enemy were caused exceptional difficulties and damage from the "rains war" waged by the Soviet partisans, who tore up thousands of kilo-

metres of railway lines, thus hindering the retreat of the Germans and facilitating their pursuit by the Soviet Army. They also saved Soviet civilians from extermination or from being driven off into slavery in fascist Germany. They liberated prisoners and restored to the civilian inhabitants the property which the Germans had plundered.

During the course of the Great Patriotic War the partisan detachments wiped out hundreds of thousands of Hitlerites, wrecked innumerable German trains, blew up thousands of railway and road bridges and destroyed thousands of tanks, armoured cars, guns, motor trucks and aircraft.

The outstanding partisan leaders Sidor Kovpak, A. F. Fyodorov, P. Vershigora and others were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

Before the war S. A. Kovpak was the chairman of the Soviet of the small Ukrainian town of Putivl. When the Germans occupied the town, Kovpak and a comrade named Rudnev organized a partisan detachment which became famous all over the Ukraine. In 1942, Kovpak and other partisan leaders were called to Moscow to see Stalin, and there it was decided to organize a partisan raid deep into the interior of the Ukraine west of the Dnieper for the purpose of rousing the people to fight the Germans and of striking at the enemy's communications. Kovpak's detachments conducted devastating warfare on a large scale in Carpathian Ukraine where, among other things, they destroyed several oil refining plants and over 50,000 tons of oil. To combat Kovpak's partisan detachments the Germans drew troops from Galicia and Hungary, but the partisans broke through the enemy encirclement and returned to the Ukraine.

All the Soviet people who had temporarily fallen under the fascist yoke waged a heroic struggle in the enemy's rear. The Germans tried to break the spirit of resistance of the Soviet patriots by means of frightful atrocities, but to no avail. An example of this heroic resistance is provided by the struggle that was waged by the Young Communist Leaguers in Krasnodon. In this small mining town an underground Young Communist League organization was formed which called itself the "Young Guard." This organization, which was led by seventeen-year-old Oleg Koshevoi, set out to wage an uncompromising struggle against the German invaders. The "Young Guard" distributed leaflets, repeatedly destroyed lists of names of people who had been marked off for deportation to Germany, and liberated prisoners from concentration camps. Owing to treachery and trickery the Young Guard organization was discovered by the Gestapo and its members were arrested. The Germans subjected these young heroes of underground warfare to frightful torture, but not one of them betrayed weakness or cowardice. Failing to break their spirit, the inhuman



fascist brutes flung them, while still alive, to the bottom of a wrecked colliery shaft.

**The Heroic Effort of the People in the Rear.** The successes which the Soviet Army achieved on the battlefield were facilitated by the tremendous patriotic enthusiasm that was displayed by the entire Soviet people in the rear. Within a short space of time the munition plants in the threatened areas were evacuated to the remote eastern regions of the country and soon began to supply the Soviet Army with all it needed. The coal and metallurgical centres which had been built in the East in the course of the fulfilment of the Stalin Five-Year Plans partly compensated for the loss of the plants in the western and southern regions occupied by the enemy. In many cases the evacuated plants were put up and operated in districts where there had been no industry whatever before. New plants were erected at war-time tempo. The local inhabitants and the évacuées worked with self-sacrificing zeal under the most trying conditions.

The scale of the organizing work done in the rear by Soviet people during the Great Patriotic War is unprecedented in the history of war. Within a short space of time the output of the Kuznetsk Steel Plant began to make good the temporary loss of the Donetz Basin. Huge new blast furnaces were erected in Magnitogorsk. In Chelyabinsk, a giant steel plant was erected. Many of the old plants in the Urals were entirely reconstructed. The Urals became an enormous arsenal for the Soviet Army. In Siberia and Central Asia, new machine-building, automobile, electrical engineering and chemical plants were erected.

Socialist emulation was undertaken on an unprecedented scale, Stakhanov methods of working became extensively employed and the movement for producing new inventions assumed mass proportions. All this testified to the enormous creative energy of the working class and to its indomitable will to achieve victory. An extremely important part in the armament industries began to be played by women and juveniles. During the war the trade and factory training schools provided industry with over 2,000,000 trained workers, and women learned the most complicated trades, so-called men's jobs, and were exemplary in their labour heroism.

In the factories the young workers formed themselves into what were called "front brigades." The young Moscow workingwoman, Yekaterina Baryshnikova, started a movement among the young workers to overfulfil production plans with fewer workers. Katya Baryshnikova overfulfilled her own plan with three workers assisting her instead of six as formerly. Her example was followed by young workers all over the country with the result that tens of thousands of workers became available for other jobs.

In his Order of the Day of May 1, 1944, Comrade Stalin paid a tribute to the working class, which, amidst the trying conditions

of the war, had achieved decisive successes in the mass production of arms, ammunition, equipment and provisions for the Red Army.

Equally self-sacrificing was the effort exerted by the collective-farm peasantry to bring about victory over the German fascist invaders. During the Great Patriotic War collective farmers, men and women, displayed an understanding of the interests of the State that reached a high level. By their intense labours they ensured regular supplies of food and raw materials for the Soviet Army and the country as a whole. The women collective farmers proved to be a great force in the countryside. For example, in the Ryazan Region, the women's tractor team led by Darya Garmash showed record results all through the war of area covered per tractor. The All-Union contest between women's tractor teams begun on her initiative was of great benefit to her native land. The young people in the collective farms were pioneers in introducing new methods of labour into agriculture and thus increasing output.

The Soviet intelligentsia too made a priceless contribution to the cause of victory, boldly resorting to innovations in the spheres of technology and culture, developing science, and applying its achievements to the manufacture of weapons for the Soviet Army. Soviet physicists, chemists, mathematicians, medical men and other scientists achieved great success in their respective spheres, and employed their achievements to help bring about the defeat of the enemy. Academicians Burdenko, Abrikosov, Orbeli, Bogomolets and Lena Stern achieved wonderful results in the field of medicine and thus saved the lives of innumerable wounded fighters. Academicians Bardin and Baikov, by their researches in the field of metallurgy, helped to develop Soviet industry still further. Academicians Lysenko, Tsitsin, Pryanishnikov and others, devised new methods of increasing agricultural output. The botanists, Academicians Komarov and Keller, and the geologists, Academicians Fersman, Obruchev and others, worked very hard during the Patriotic War to develop further the natural resources of the U.S.S.R. As a result of the labours of Soviet scientists immense deposits of ores and various other valuable minerals were discovered. The Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and the Academies of Sciences of the Union Republics achieved great successes in all branches of science.

The entire Soviet people displayed exceptional solicitude for the needs of the Soviet Army. One of the manifestations of this was the broad popular movement for the collection of contributions for the Soviet Army Fund. At the end of 1942, when the battle of Stalingrad was at its height, the collective farmers in the Tambov Region within a few days collected a considerable sum of money to build tanks. The example of the Tambov collective farmers was followed by collective farmers all over the country. On the initiative of F. P. Golovaty, a collective farmer in the Saratov Region, many collective

farmers contributed all their savings to the Soviet Army Fund. Golovaty wrote a letter to Comrade Stalin saying that he had contributed 100,000 rubles, all his savings, for the purpose of building a fighter plane. He was allowed to pick out a fighter plane at an aircraft factory and to have the following inscription made on it: "A gift to the Stalingrad Front from Golovaty of the Stakhanov Collective Farm." Comrade Stalin sent Golovaty a message of greetings and thanks for his gift. Comrade Stalin wrote: "Thank you, Ferapont Petrovich, for your concern for the Red Army and its air force. The Red Army will not forget that you gave up all your savings to build a combat aircraft."

The example of collective farmer Golovaty was followed by many thousands of working people in the provinces and non-Russian republics. By March 31, 1943, over 7,000,000,000 rubles and large quantities of provisions and miscellaneous articles had been contributed to the Soviet Army Fund, and throughout the war about 13,000,000,000 rubles in money and a huge sum in state loan bonds were contributed to the Defence Fund. In addition to contributing to the Defence Fund, the Soviet people rendered the state enormous assistance by subscribing to war loans.

The close unity between the rear and the front during the Great Patriotic War not only upset all the enemy's calculations on the Soviet system lacking stability, but was a vital factor in bringing about his utter defeat.

**The Rout of Hitler Germany in 1945.** The year 1945 arrived, the year in which the Soviet Army's historic victories reached their culmination, and saw the utter defeat of fascist Germany. In January 1945, the Soviet Army began to liberate Poland and Czechoslovakia. The troops of the U.S.S.R.'s allies were successfully pushing towards Germany's vital centres. During these decisive days of the beginning of February 1945, a conference of the leaders of the great Allied Powers—Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill—was held in the Livadia Palace near Yalta, in the Crimea. The conference drew up a plan for the final defeat of Germany. At this time Germany was held in the vise of two fronts. The heads of the three Great Powers agreed that they would demand fascist Germany's unconditional surrender. In their joint declaration on the conference, the leaders of the Great Allied Powers said: "It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world."

The leaders of the Three Powers also stated that it was not their purpose to destroy the German people. When Nazism and militarism were extirpated, they said, the German people would find ways for a decent existence in the comity of nations. To maintain peace and security the Crimea Conference decided to set up with the other Allied Powers a world-wide, international organization of United Nations.

The Crimea Conference also adopted a "Declaration on Liberated Europe" which proclaimed the principle that the Three Powers would co-ordinate their policies and adopt joint decisions on the major political and economic questions concerning liberated Europe.

The united action of the Allies ensured their victory over Germany. The military situation became catastrophic for the latter. As a result of the onslaughts of the Soviet Army, which had pushed into German Silesia in the south and into East Prussia and Pomerania in the east and north, the German forces retreated into the interior of Germany. The Soviet Army's uninterrupted offensive resulted in the defeat of the Koenigsberg group of German troops. On April 9, 1945, the Soviet Army stormed and captured the city of Koenigsberg. Several days later, on April 13, the Soviet Army liberated Vienna, the capital of Austria.

The road to Berlin was open for the Soviet Army. The Germans hurled all their reserves against it. The Soviet assault on Berlin was launched simultaneously from different directions. On the night of April 19, tens of thousands of guns opened fire on the city. By order of Marshal Zhukov, the Soviet Army launched a sudden night attack. After artillery preparation, thousands of tanks made a drive for Berlin; about 5,000 aircraft rained bombs on the German positions. On April 21, the Soviet troops, after breaking through the defences of Berlin, engaged the enemy in its suburbs. The ring closed tighter and tighter around the city. At last the forward units forced their way to the centre of Berlin and hoisted the Red flag over the German Reichstag. The Order of the Day of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Comrade Stalin of May 2, 1945, contained the long-awaited announcement: "The Red Army has captured Berlin."

While the Soviet Army's assault on Berlin was at its height, the Allied troops were rapidly advancing through German territory, meeting with no resistance on the part of the Germans. In an endeavour to cause a split in the ranks of the Allies the Germans offered to surrender to the United States and Great Britain, but refused to capitulate to the Soviet Union.

But this time too the German fascist manoeuvre failed. The Allies demanded unconditional surrender from Germany. On May 8, 1945, the leaders of Germany's armed forces signed an act of unconditional surrender. The Germans reported the suicide of Hitler, Goebbels and of other of Hitler's accomplices. The rest of the rulers of the fascist state, including Goering and Field Marshal Keitel, were arrested and delivered up to an International Tribunal, which tried the major war criminals in Nuremburg.

On May 9, 1945, Comrade Stalin issued an address to the people announcing that the great day of victory over Germany had arrived. In this address Comrade Stalin said: "We now have full grounds for

saying that the historic day of the final defeat of Germany, the day of our people's great victory over German imperialism has arrived. The great sacrifices we have made for the freedom and independence of our country, the incalculable privation and suffering our people have endured during the war, our intense labours in the rear and at the front, laid at the altar of our motherland, have not been in vain; they have been crowned by complete victory over the enemy. The age-long struggle of the Slavonic peoples for their existence and independence has ended in victory over the German aggressors and German tyranny. Henceforth, the great banner of the freedom of the peoples and peace between the peoples will fly over Europe" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, pp. 196-97).

**The Defeat of the Japanese Imperialists.** After the defeat and capitulation of fascist Germany, the Allies were faced with the task of defeating imperialist Japan, which continued the war despite the fact that Hitler Germany had capitulated.

Faithful to its duty as an ally, the Soviet Union adhered to the Potsdam Declaration of the United States, Great Britain and China of July 26, 1945, which demanded Japan's unconditional surrender.

The Japanese imperialists had been long-standing enemies of the Russian people and had made repeated attempts to seize our Far Eastern territory. As far back as 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War, Japan tried to cut off our country from the Pacific and the outlets to the ports of Kamchatka and Chukotsk. In 1918-1922, when the Soviet Republic was beating off the attacks of the interventionists and upholding its independence, the Japanese imperialists tried to seize the Soviet Far East. The young Red Army, in arduous battles, drove the Japanese aggressors from Soviet soil. In 1938, the Japanese made another predatory attack upon the Soviet Union in the region of Lake Hasan, and in 1939 they attacked, in the region of Khalkhin-gol, the Mongolian People's Republic, with which the Soviet Union had signed a treaty of mutual assistance. These attempts were also frustrated by the valiant Red Army. During the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War against Germany the Japanese held their Kwantung Army, consisting of picked troops, on the Soviet frontier, threatening to cross it at any moment.

The Soviet State could no longer tolerate this constant menace in the East, and so the Soviet government announced that as from August 9, 1945, the Soviet Union would be at war with Japan.

The Soviet Army launched an offensive in the Far East in several directions, and within a short space of time routed the Kwantung Army—the largest group of Japanese armies—and liberated Manchuria.

The U.S.S.R.'s entry into the war against Japan and the successes achieved by the Soviet Army hastened the defeat of imperialist

Japan. On September 2, 1945, unable to continue the war any longer, the Japanese capitulated and the Soviet people were able to present to the Japanese aggressors their just demand for retribution.

Commenting on the capitulation of imperialist Japan, Comrade Stalin said: "We of the older generation waited for this day for forty years, and now this day has arrived. Today Japan admitted defeat and signed an act of unconditional surrender.

"This means that the southern part of Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands revert to the Soviet Union and henceforth will serve not as a barrier between the Soviet Union and the ocean and a base for Japanese attack upon our Far East, but as a direct means of communication between the Soviet Union and the ocean and a base for the defence of our country against Japanese aggression.

"Our Soviet people spared neither strength nor labour for the sake of victory. We experienced extremely hard years. But now every one of us can say: We have won. Henceforth we can regard our country as being free from the menace of German invasion in the West and of Japanese invasion in the East. The long-awaited peace for the peoples of all the world has come" (J. Stalin, *On the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, Moscow, 1946, pp. 209-10).

**The Causes and the Sources of the Victory of the Soviet Union.** The victory of the Soviet Union in the Great Patriotic War roused the admiration of all progressive mankind. The whole world recognized the great merits of the Soviet Army, which by its heroic and self-sacrificing struggle had saved world civilization from the German fascist barbarians and the Japanese imperialists. The Soviet Army stood before the whole world as an army of liberation, and the Soviet Union as the saviour of civilization and progress in Europe and throughout the world.

What was the source of the Soviet Army's great victory?

The Soviet Army was able successfully to perform its duty to its country and carry out its liberating mission in relation to the peoples of Europe primarily because it received the devoted support of all the peoples of the Soviet Union; because its victory was ensured by the entire state and social system of our country.

As Comrade Stalin emphasized in the speech he delivered on February 9, 1946, the victory of the U.S.S.R. signifies first of all, that the Soviet social system was victorious and had successfully passed the test of the fire of war and proved that it is fully viable; secondly, the victory of the U.S.S.R. signifies that our Soviet state system was victorious, that our multi-national Soviet State passed all the tests of the war and proved its viability; thirdly, the victory of the U.S.S.R. signifies that the Soviet armed forces, the Soviet Army, was victorious, the Soviet Army which had heroically withstood all the hardships of the war and had routed most powerful enemies.

The socialist system which arose out of the October Revolution lent our people and our Red Army great and invincible strength. The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., the successful execution of the three Five-Year Plans for the development of our national economy, made it possible to prepare the country for active defence even amidst the extremely unfavourable conditions created by the enemy's perfidious and unexpected attack. The victory of the policy of industrializing the country and of collectivizing agriculture created the material possibilities for organizing the defence.

Amidst the unprecedented difficulties created by the Patriotic War the Soviet multi-national state proved to be strong and invincible. Being a model of what a multi-national state should be, and built on the basis of Socialism, the Soviet Union draws strength from the indestructible friendship that exists among the peoples of our country. Ukrainians and Byelorussians, Georgians and Armenians, Uzbeks and Turkmenians—all the peoples of the boundless Land of Soviets, led by the great Russian people—fought heroically on the different fronts during the Great Patriotic War. The glorious roll of Heroes of the Soviet Union contains the names of Soviet patriots of the most diverse nationalities. The Russian airman, thrice Hero of the Soviet Union, Alexander Pokryshkin, the Ukrainian partisan Sidor Kovpak, the Byelorussian partisan Sosnovsky, the Kazakh Tulegen Tokhtarov, the Georgian Mikhail Takhokidze, the Latvian Janis Wilhelms, the Estonian Meri and the Jew Gorelik are but a few of the names of the long list of men and women who today are the pride of the peoples of the Soviet Union. Valiant representatives of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R. fearlessly rushed into battle with the cry: "For our Motherland!, For Stalin!"

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party headed by the greatest leaders of mankind, Lenin and Stalin, the Soviet State, that product of the age-long struggle of the great Russian people, converted our country into an impregnable fortress.

The greatest source of the Soviet Union's strength is the leading and directing role played by the Bolshevik Party among the masses of the people. During the Patriotic War, the Bolshevik Party was the inspirer and organizer of the nation-wide struggle against the fascist invaders; and it was as a result of the organizing activities of the Party that all the efforts of the Soviet people were united and directed towards the common goal.

The Great Patriotic War revealed the mighty strength of Soviet patriotism, which is linked with the entire glorious past of the peoples of our country. The splendid qualities and fighting traditions of the Soviet people found expression in the mass heroism which they displayed at the front and in the rear in defending the honour, freedom and independence of their Soviet Motherland. Many of the names of

Soviet heroes have now become legendary. Such, for example, is the immortal name of Captain Castello, who in the first days of the war sent his burning aeroplane hurtling down upon an enemy supply column; such is the name of Hero of the Soviet Union, Guardsman Alexander Matrosov, who with his body blocked the embrasure of a pillbox, the continuous firing from which was hindering the advance of attacking Soviet Army forces; such are the names of the twenty-eight guardsmen of Panfilov's Division, who gave their last drop of blood in defence of their positions near Moscow; such are the names of the sixteen guardsmen who at the cost of their lives repulsed the fierce attack of twelve enemy tanks at a decisive moment in the enemy's offensive at Stalingrad. The entire Soviet people reveres the memory of Heroes of the Soviet Union, members of the Young Communist League, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Liza Chaikina, Sasha Chekalin and Victor Talalikhin, of the girl snipers Natasha Kovshova and Maria Polivanova, of the young Krasnodon heroes headed by Oleg Koshevoi, and of many others like them.

The victory of the Soviet armed forces was also ensured by the Soviet military art and the wise strategy of Stalin. Generalissimo of the Soviet Union, Comrade Stalin, trained splendid Generals of a new type like Zhukov, Konev, Vasilyevsky, Tolbukhin, Govorov, Vatutin, Antonov and others, who proved themselves outstanding front commanders and everywhere successfully applied the Stalinist science and art of war in all their strength and might.

Lastly, the Soviet Army was victorious because the organizer and inspirer of its liberating struggle was the leader of the peoples, the greatest of strategists and generals, Comrade Stalin. It was with the name of Stalin on their lips that the Soviet people went into battle, and with it they emerged victorious.

**The Five-Year Plan for the Restoration and Development of the National Economy of the U.S.S.R.** The historic victories which the Soviet people achieved in the Great Patriotic War enabled the U.S.S.R. to pass back to peacetime socialist construction. On February 10, 1946, the Soviet people, with splendid unanimity, elected new Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. which was to pass measures to promote the immense task of post-war restoration. The people's first candidate, Comrade Stalin, in the historic speech he delivered on February 9, 1946 at a meeting of voters in the Stalin District of Moscow, revealed to the Soviet people wide prospects of further development of the Land of Socialism, of a tremendous advance in the economic and cultural development of our country, of the consolidation of the economic and military might of the Soviet State and of an increase in the well-being of the masses of the people.

Stalin's views on the post-war restoration and further development of the Soviet State were embodied in a new Five-Year Plan which



the First Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Second Convocation, passed as a law entitled The Five-Year Plan for the Restoration and Development of the National Economy for 1946-1950.

The U.S.S.R.'s victory in the Patriotic War was achieved at the cost of immense sacrifice. The German invaders caused our country untold damage. The Supreme Soviet therefore gave priority to the task of restoring the devastated regions and of raising industry and agriculture to the pre-war level. After that the pre-war level is to be exceeded to a considerable degree. This means giving first place to restoring and further developing the heavy industry and the railways, a further increase in the output of agriculture and of the industries which produce consumers' goods, the creation in the country of an abundance of the principal consumers' goods, and a general improvement in the material welfare of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

To ensure the powerful development of the national economy of the U.S.S.R. the new Five-Year Plan provides for further technical progress in all branches of the national economy; this will ensure higher productivity of labour.

The new Five-Year Plan also calls for the exertion of the efforts of the entire Soviet people to carry out the main economic task of the U.S.S.R., namely, to overtake and outstrip the principle capitalist countries economically.

Thus, the new Stalin plan opens for our Socialist Motherland the great prospect of completing the building of Socialism and of the gradual transition from Socialism to Communism. Under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the Soviet people will carry out this historic task and usher in a new era in world history.

## PRINCIPAL DATES IN THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.S.R. (1894-1946)

1894-1917 . . . . .	Reign of Nicholas II
1895 . . . . .	The League of the Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class is formed in St. Petersburg
1897-1900 . . . . .	Lenin is in exile
1898, March . . . . .	The First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. is held in Minsk
1900-1903 . . . . .	Period of Lenin's <i>Iskra</i>
1902 . . . . .	Demonstration takes place in Batum under the leadership of Comrade Stalin
1903, July-August . . . . .	The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. is held
1904-1905 . . . . .	Russo-Japanese War
1905, January 9 (22). . . . .	Bloody Sunday—The beginning of the revolution
1905, April . . . . .	The Third Congress of the Party is held
1905, May . . . . .	Battle of Tsushima
1905, June . . . . .	Revolt on the battleship <i>Potenkin</i>
1905, October . . . . .	The All-Russian general political strike takes place
1905, October 17. . . . .	Nicholas II issues Manifesto
1905, December . . . . .	Armed insurrection in Moscow
1906, April . . . . .	The Fourth Congress of the Party is held
1906, April-July . . . . .	The First State Duma meets
1906, November . . . . .	The Stolypin agrarian law is passed
1907, February-June . . . . .	The Second State Duma meets
1907, May . . . . .	The Fifth Congress of the Party is held
1907, July . . . . .	The Third of June <i>coup d'état</i> is carried out
1907, November . . . . .	Opening of the Third State Duma (1907-1912)
1912 . . . . .	The Prague (Sixth) Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) is held
1912, April 4 (17). . . . .	The workers are shot down in the Lena Gold Fields
1912, April 22 . . . . . (May 5)	The First issue of <i>Pravda</i> appears
1912, November . . . . .	Opening of Fourth State Duma (1912-1917)
1914, August . . . . .	The First World War commences
1914, November . . . . .	The Bolshevik members of the Fourth State Duma are arrested

- 1917, February 25 (March 10) . . . The general strike in Petrograd. Armed insurrection begins
- 1917, February 27 . . . The February Revolution. The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is formed. The autocracy is overthrown (March 12)
- 1917, March 12 (25). . . Comrade Stalin returns from exile
- 1917, April 3 (16) . . . V. I. Lenin returns from abroad
- 1917, April . . . The Seventh All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) is held
- 1917, July 3-5 (16-18). July demonstrations
- 1917, July-August. . . The Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) is held
- 1917, July-October . . . Lenin goes underground
- 1917, October 10 (23). The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) passes resolution to put armed insurrection on the order of the day
- 1917, October 16 (29). The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) elects a Party Centre, headed by Comrade Stalin, to direct the insurrection
- 1917, October 24 (evening of November 6). Lenin arrives at the Smolny to direct the armed insurrection jointly with Stalin
- 1917, October 25 (November 7) The Great October Socialist Revolution. Armed insurrection in Petrograd. The Provisional Government is overthrown
- 1917, October 25-26 (November 7-8) The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is held. The October decrees (on peace and land) are passed. The Council of People's Commissars is formed, headed by Comrade Lenin
- 1917, November 3 (16). The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia is issued
- 1918, January . . . The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets is held
- 1918, March . . . The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk is signed
- 1918, February-November German occupation of the Ukraine
- 1918, March . . . The Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held
- 1918, May . . . The Czechoslovak mutiny
- 1918, July . . . The Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets is held. The Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. is adopted
- 1918, August . . . Foul attempt on the life of V. I. Lenin by Socialist-Revolutionaries in conjunction with Bukharinites
- 1918, August-December Stalin and Voroshilov direct defence of Tsaritsyn (now Stalingrad)
- 1919, March . . . The Communist International is founded

- 1919, March . . . . The Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held.  
Adopts program. Passes resolution on the attitude  
to be taken towards the middle peasants
- 1919, April-May . . . Kolchak offensive and its defeat (first Entente  
campaign)
- 1919, May-October . . Denikin offensive and its defeat in conformity with  
Comrade Stalin's plan (second Entente campaign)
- 1919, June-July. . . Stalin directs defence of Petrograd against Yude-  
nich
- 1919, October-Novem- Yudenich is defeated near Petrograd  
ber
- 1920, March-April . . The Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held
- 1920, March-November Period of the struggle against Wrangel
- 1920, November . . . The storming of Perekop and the rout of Wrangel
- 1921, March . . . . Peace treaty with Poland is signed in Riga.  
The Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held.  
Adopts decision to go over to New Economic  
Policy
- 1922, March-April . . The Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held
- 1922, April . . . . J. V. Stalin is elected General Secretary of the Cen-  
tral Committee of the R.C.P.(B.)
- 1922, December 30 . . The U.S.S.R. is formed
- 1922, February-Novem- The Russian Far East is liberated from Japanese  
ber interventionists
- 1923, April . . . . The Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is held
- 1924, January 21 . . Death of V. I. Lenin
- 1924, January . . . . The Second All-Union Congress of Soviets adopts  
Constitution of the U.S.S.R.
- 1924, April . . . . Comrade Stalin's work *The Foundations of*  
*Leninism* appears
- 1924, May . . . . The Thirteenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) is  
held
- 1925, April . . . . The Fourteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is  
held. The national economy of the U.S.S.R.  
reaches pre-war level
- 1925, December . . . The Fourteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), the  
Industrialization Congress, is held
- 1926, October-Novem- The Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is  
ber held
- 1927, December . . . The Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), the  
Collectivization of Agriculture Congress, is held
- 1928-1932 . . . . First Five-Year Plan period
- 1929 . . . . . The Year of Great Change
- 1929, July . . . . The conflict on the Chinese Eastern Railway

- 1930, June-July . . . The Sixteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is held. Proclaims a wide socialist offensive along the whole front
- 1931, February . . . Comrade Stalin issues slogan: "Master Technique"
- 1931, June . . . . Comrade Stalin formulates his six conditions
- 1933 - 1937 . . . . The Second Five-Year Plan period
- 1934, January-February . . . The Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), the Victors' Congress, is held
- 1934, December 1 . . . Foul assassination of S. M. Kirov by Trotskyite, Zinovievite and Bukharinite bandits
- 1935, August . . . . The Stakhanov movement begins
- 1936, June-November. . . Nation-wide discussion of the draft of the Stalin Constitution of the U.S.S.R.
- 1936, June . . . . Foul murder of Maxim Gorky by Trotskyite, Zinovievite and Bukharinite bandits
- 1936, November-December . . The Extraordinary Eighth All-Union Congress of Soviets is held
- 1936, December 5. . . The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. is adopted
- 1937, December . . . General election to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. takes place
- 1939, March . . . . The Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is held
- 1939, September 17 . . The Red Army crosses frontier to protect the lives and property of the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia
- 1939, November 1 . . Western Ukraine becomes part of the U.S.S.R., being reunited with the Ukrainian S.S.R.
- 1939, November 2 . . Western Byelorussia becomes part of the U.S.S.R. and is reunited with the Byelorussian S.S.R.
- 1939, December . . . Nation-wide celebration of Comrade Stalin's sixtieth birthday
- 1940, March 12 . . . Peace treaty signed between the U.S.S.R. and Finland
- 1940, March 31 . . . Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic becomes the Union Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic
- 1940, June . . . . Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina are liberated from the yoke of the Rumanian boyars
- 1940, August 2 . . . The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic is formed
- 1940, August 3 . . . The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is accepted into the U.S.S.R.

- 1940, August 5. . . . The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is accepted into the U.S.S.R.
- 1940, August 6. . . . The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is accepted into the U.S.S.R.
- 1941, June 22. . . . Germany perfidiously attacks the U.S.S.R.
- 1941, December. . . . The Germans are defeated near Moscow
- 1942, December. . . . The German armies are defeated near Stalingrad
- 1943, July. . . . . The Battle of Kursk is fought
- 1945, May 2. . . . . The Red Army captures Berlin
- 1945, May 8. . . . . Unconditional surrender of Germany
- 1945, August 9. . . . The Soviet Union declares war on Japan
- 1945, September 2. . . Unconditional surrender of Japan
- 1946, February 10. . . General election of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Second Convocation, takes place.